THE READER ORGANISATION

England & Wales · Charity number 1126806

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	06607389
Registered	2008-11-19
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	The Reader Organisation The Mansion House Calderstones Park Liverpool L18 3JB
Phone	07807106770
Email	info@thereader.org.uk
Website	www.thereader.org.uk

Activities

Objects: TO PROMOTE ANY CHARITABLE PURPOSES FOR THE BENEFIT OF CITIZENS AND INHABITANTS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND OTHER COUNTRIES, IN PARTICULAR THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION, THE FURTHERANCE OF HEALTH, THE RELIEF OF POVERTY, DISTRESS AND SICKNESS, THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL INCLUSION AND FURTHERANCE OF COMMUNITY ESPECIALLY THROUGH READING AND LITERATURE-BASED ACTIVITIES

Activities: We aim to bring about a Reading Revolution making it possible for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to enjoy and engage with books on a deep and personal level. We aim to improve well-being and build communities through shared reading. Our work is driven by the heartfelt belief that literacy is not just the ability to read, but the state of being a reader.

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Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** Education/training, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, The Prevention Or Relief Of Poverty, Arts/culture/heritage/science, Other Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** UNDEFINED. IN PRACTICE, LOCAL
- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£4,586,647	£4,883,069	£4,935,028	175
2024-03-31	£4,354,896	£4,982,133	£5,231,451	181
2023-03-31	£4,241,373	£4,912,149	£5,858,940	175
2022-03-31	£4,064,045	£4,197,492	£6,529,718	151
2021-03-31	£3,646,527	£3,466,633	£6,663,165	134

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Anita Marsland	Chair	2019-09-09
Dr Helen Willows		2021-05-17
Dr Ruth Hussey		2018-11-12
Neil Atkinson		2021-05-17
Pauline Hughes		2024-11-21
Pranav Sood		2019-05-20
Sarah Fletcher		2020-09-14

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THE READER ORGANISATION

England & Wales - Charity number 1126806

Accounts

Charity registration number 1126806 (England and Wales)

Charity registration number SC043054 (Scotland)

Company registration number 06607389

THE READER ORGANISATION

ANNUAL REPORT AND CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025



THE READER ORGANISATION

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Mrs S Fletcher Mr P K Sood Mr H Biddell Dr R M Hussey CB,OBE,DL Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair) Dr H Willows Mr O Alake Mr Nl Atkinson
Secretary	Ms J Martin
Managing Director Director of Literature Director of Finance, Governance & Commercial Planning	Ms J Guerrier Ms K Clarke Ms V Hopton
Charity number (England and Wales)	1126806
Charity number (Scotland)	SC043054
Company number	06607389
Registered office	The Mansion House Calderstones Park Liverpool Merseyside L18 3JB
Auditor	Xeinadin Audit Limited 46 Hamilton Square Birkenhead Wirral CH41 5AR
Bankers	Santander UK Plc Bridle Road Bootle Merseyside L30 4GB

THE READER ORGANISATION

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THE READER ORGANISATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2024 - 2025 (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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1. Welcome to The Reader

The Reader's mission is to bring about a reading revolution, ensuring that literature becomes part of the fabric of life, and that Shared Reading groups are widely available, bringing people and books together in welcoming places. In this report, we are proud to share the story of The Reader's year - a year in which we have increased our impact in a number of areas to deliver this mission.

This report highlights growth in participation in our Shared Reading groups across the UK; an increase in visits from children and families to the Storybarn; an expansion of our Reading Heroes programme for care experienced children and an increase in visits to the Home of Shared Reading in Calderstones, Liverpool. There are many highlights in this report, with numbers, projects and stories, but it is hard to encapsulate the thousands of small moments and small acts that make up this impact, like a wondrous kaleidoscope. 96% of Shared Reading group members said they had conversations that matter in their groups this year. This is no small thing. Human connection is the foundation for living well but it takes lots of small moments to create. A warm welcome. An open door. Some quiet encouragement. A wondrous piece of literature, prepared and shared, with care. We are so grateful to all our volunteers and staff for all they do and are delighted to share some stories from our Shared Reading community in this report.

It could be easy to feel overwhelmed by the scale of The Reader's mission, especially in these turbulent times when feelings of division and disconnection are felt by so many. The need for strong social infrastructure is clear and that is what The Reader provides – communities based on Shared Reading, welcoming spaces and meaningful connections. In the UK and beyond, we are faced with discouraging statistics about the decline in reading habits which challenges The Reader to be bold in how we seek to engage new communities and work alongside others.

Like many other charities and arts organisations, it has been a year of challenge as well as impact. The economic environment doesn't just affect our finances, it affects our people – our staff and volunteers - as well as many of our partners and it has required us to make hard choices about our resources. We thank all of our people and our amazing supporters for their dedication and commitment over the last year, without which we wouldn't be able to achieve the deep and meaningful impact outlined in this report.

Jemma Guerrier, Managing Director & Anita Marsland, Chair of Trustees

A need at times to be together and talk -

And then the finding we can walk

More firmly through dark narrow places

A need to reach out sometimes hand to hand -

And then find Earth less like an alien land...

A need at times of each for each

Direct as the need of throat and tongue for speech

From *Not Love Perhaps*, by A.S.J Tessimond

2. What is Shared Reading?

Each week, The Reader brings people together at Shared Reading groups across the UK. These groups are free, and for everyone.

At Shared Reading groups, a trained Reader Leader selects stories and poems to read aloud together. Everyone is welcome to share how the words make them feel, as well as their thoughts, ideas and memories. There is no pressure to talk or read aloud.

Everyone experiences what is read in their own way, but the shared language found in literature can help us to understand ourselves – and others – better.



Watch our video about Shared Reading here

3. Delia’s Reader Story

Retired nurse Delia Cartlidge and husband Stuart, a former aeronautical engineer, have been married for 52 years. Delia became Stuart’s carer after he was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s Disease in 2020.

The couple, who are both 76, joined The Reader’s dementia friendly Shared Reading group at Liverpool Central Library last October. Sadly, Stuart’s condition deteriorated. Delia continues to go to the group by herself...

“Listening to someone read aloud is very therapeutic, it takes you into another world or time, and you can forget any problems or troubles in your own life, if only for a short time.

Speaking for Stuart and myself, that hour every Wednesday was like a port in a storm where we could forget about dementia and relax. For me especially, it lightened the load of being a carer, and so helped me to cope with an increasingly difficult situation.

Now that Stuart can no longer attend the group, that hour every Wednesday has become even more beneficial to me. I just love it! It's the highlight of my week. We have all sorts of people dropping into the group of all ages which is also good."

4. How Shared Reading Helps

Below the surface stream, shallow and light,
Of what we say we feel—below the stream,
As light, of what we think we feel—there flows
With noiseless current strong, obscure and deep,
The central stream of what we feel indeed.'
Matthew Arnold

We live in a time of rising concern over the impact of increasing digitisation and links to anxiety and loss of real human connection. A recent UK study by Campaign to End Lonliness reported 26 million people (This equates to nearly 50% of all adults across the country) feeling lonely occasionally, sometimes, often or always. Shared Reading can help. Our most recent feedback week responses showed that 74% of group members feel that Shared Reading helps them to connect with others in a deeper way, to reach 'below the surface stream' to what we 'feel indeed'.

Shared Reading groups don't only bring people together around the table (either in person or online) they use great literature – the most powerful human connection tool in existence, to uncover connections between people and invite people into mental places where they can uncover lost or buried connections within themselves.

> ***'Some of the words I'm coming out with - I think to myself, you know, I've not said that before, or thought to say that before'***

Donald, Shared Reading group member

For The Reader, the meaning of 'great' is not dependent on whether a text has been sanctioned by history or public opinion. For us the term 'great' is about what the literature **does**. In Shared Reading groups we use it to help us share experiences and create space for finding and naming thoughts and feelings. We relate to the characters on the page as well as the other people in the group. We meet people with very different experiences as we travel across time and space and cross cultural divides through insight into the inner experience of individual humans. And through the experience we learn more about them, and also about ourselves.

> '*When human problems don't have a shape or language they become impossible to navigate and therefore very painful...You can see the impact on [someone] when they recognise a word that makes sense of what they are feeling. This is what the literature is doing in a Shared Reading group – providing a language for experience.'*

Alison Liebling from the Prisons Research Centre, University of Cambridge.

5. Year at a Glance

Please note, percentages indicate year on year increases.

515 (+4%) active adult Shared Reading groups in the UK

639 (+2%) active Volunteers in the UK

24,372 (+17%) Shared Reading participants in the UK

61% increase in attendance at Shared Reading groups in our home in Calderstones Park

International Shared Reading now in **19 countries** with **360** (+20%) trained Reader Leaders

93 active Reading Heroes volunteers in the UK

18,629 (+11%) visits to the Storybarn, our magical multi-purpose play space for children

Launched new partnerships with **YMCA RISE recovery services, Tower Hamlets Virtual School and Mersey Forest.**

Criminal Justice contract continued to deliver Shared Reading in **28 PIPEs** (Psychologically Informed Planned Environments), including the first groups in PIPE settings that house residents with additional needs. Additionally, we were recommissioned to deliver in three other CJ settings and secured a brand new contract, meaning we now deliver Shared Reading in a total of 32 CJ settings in the UK

1410 (+7%) people attended our Christmas Story Trail.

Sold **11,912** tickets (+4%) generating **£144,227** (+20%) in ticket income.

139,617 active website users (+12%)

1491 (+15%) children attended heritage school trips.

Launched our second **Christmas Appeal,** raising **£9,566,84** (+11.8%) to support our Shared Reading groups for people living with dementia.

146% increase in media coverage

We now recycle more of our waste than goes to landfill. **100%** of our waste was diverted from landfill**. 370 meals** saved on food waste reduction app Too Good to Go (that's **999kg** of CO2 avoided**). 1,342** kWh of solar energy generated.

Served **44,167** (+32%) cups of tea, **140,528** (123%) cups of coffee and **88,890** (+33%) scoops of ice cream.

Delivered **199** (+81%) events, from weddings to wakes, and christenings to corporate away days.

Operated a welcoming public building seven days a week attracting over **440,000** (+11%) visits.

Published **40** new episodes of The Reader podcast.

6. Our Reading Heroes project

What do you think about reading now?
"Relaxing, cool, easier"
Reading Heroes Participant

Since 2016, we've been successfully promoting the benefits of reading for pleasure for Care Experienced children aged two to 15 year through our national Reading Heroes and Liverpool based Tiny Heroes programme.

We match our Reading Heroes with a highly trained volunteer to enjoy the magic of reading aloud together; Tiny Heroes focusses on volunteer led home visits to preschool age children, bringing to life the wonder of story sharing, singing and nursery rhymes.

We know that Reading Heroes has a profound impact on the lives of the young people we read with; we're ambitious and proud of the work we're doing to ensure that as many Care Experienced young people as possible can experience Shared Reading. This year we have expanded our training and delivery model, enabling us to read with Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children, as well as those children growing up in Kinship Care arrangements.

In 2024/2025 we have been delighted to expand Reading Heroes into new Local Authority areas, including Tower Hamlets, Bury and Oldham, whilst also investing in our understanding of the changes required to process and infrastructure in order to effectively scale project delivery in a way that matches our bold ambitions for growth.

James' Reader Story

James was twelve when a referral was made to Reading Heroes by his Virtual School. It was noted in James' referral form that he was socially isolated and would benefit from the one-to-one interaction Reading Heroes provides. James was working at a lower reading age at the time of his referral, and though he had some enjoyment of reading, he often struggled with comprehension. The Reading Heroes team paired James with Helen, and the two began reading together online on a weekly basis.

During the course of James and Helen's reading placement, James was in three foster care settings. On two occasions when James was moved to a different home, The Reading Heroes team, working with James' social worker and the referrer at Sefton Virtual Schools were able to reestablish the reading placement, allowing Helen to be a constant person in James' life during a time of immense change:

"*It was SO GOOD to see James back after several months, and change of accomodation."* *Helen* wrote ***"We had fun reading different poems - he's got a real ear for rhythm and now goes back to correct himself if the rhythm is lost or if he gets a word wrong."***

Poetry became a regular feature in their reading sessions, from Spike Milligan's 'On The Ning Nang Nong' and 'Today I saw a little worm' to 'Double Double Toil and Trouble' from Macbeth, Benjamin Zephaniah and discussions about Haiku poetry.

Reading Heroes had evidently had a positive impact on James' confidence and overall wellbeing, which Helen had noticed:

"His reading is so much better than it was - he self corrects and really takes time to work out words he doesn't recognise. But more than that he's more personable."

James agreed. In a follow-up survey taken at the end of their Reading Heroes placement, when asked '*Do you feel differently about reading since starting Reading Heroes? What's changed for you?'* He simply responded **"*more confident*"**. James said that he is now reading every day and was in agreement that he 'enjoyed taking part in Reading Heroes', that he 'found it relaxing', that it was 'good to talk about his thoughts and feelings' and that he 'liked reading with other people.' When James' current carer was asked of the changes in James' confidence and self-esteem that could be linked to Reading Heroes, they commented 'can express himself',

Through all the changes that James experienced over their time reading together, the connection between James and his reading buddy Helen has been consistent. On their last reading placement, James had been awarded certificates for English and Maths, and had achieved great marks in his reading, spelling and comprehension tests. Helen wrote:

"He is enjoying reading and read beautifully today - and knew he had - and asked for my opinion. I loved that he loved what he'd done. A real sense of self confidence that I've not seen ... I told him he was brilliant, and I asked him did he know that? And he replied 'I am. I didn't know that before, but I am'

I asked him if it was ok to share - he said yes and that it was ok for me to be proud, which of course I am, very."

7. Reading with Early Years

59,825 children reached by the First Page project since 2018.

Our First Page Project brings the joy of story sharing and reading for pleasure to families across the North West, through collaboration with a network of trusted partner organisations. Our partners include children's centres, health providers and third sector organisations, such as Homestart, The Greenhouse Project and Kinship Carers.

This year, working closely with those community partners we welcomed **339 individuals** to **14 Family Fun Days**, allowing families to immerse themselves in our magical playspace The Storybarn, unleash their imaginations and explore nature.

We continued to deliver our Sharing Stories in the Early Years training, equipping **28 partner staff and volunteers** to deliver quality story times as part of their own provision and shared hints and tips to support **207 new parents** with Shared Reading as part of our 'Books & Babies' outreach sessions, hosted in community settings across the North West.

We provided ongoing support to our partners to deliver **38 weekly** community story times or 1:1 story sharing interventions.

"My absolute favourite activity this summer by far was The Storybarn, it was also thoroughly enjoyed by my little boy too. I nearly cried when I saw the upstairs for the first time it felt so special and magical, it was exactly the kind of thing that I wanted my little boy to be able to experience and to enjoy with him and if it hadn't been for Homestart I'm not sure if we ever would have made it but now I have the confidence to take him myself into the future and enjoy the magic again!"
Parent visiting First Page The Storybarn Family Fun Day with Homestart Southport

8. A Year at The Storybarn

"A truly joyous experience for the kids and adults alike."
Storybarn attendee

This year at The Storybarn has been marked by exciting achievements and growth. We engaged with **18,629** individuals (+11% on last year) across a diverse range of programmes, with standout successes including **four weeks** of fully sold-out Holiday Club. During these sessions, **24 children** joined us each weekday to explore the joys of reading for pleasure alongside creative arts and crafts activities

We were also thrilled to host our first-ever Brunch with Mrs Claus, a new collaboration between Storybarn and Events. Both sessions sold out quickly, and the celebration provided families with a magical and innovative way to enjoy the festive season together.

In addition, we enhanced our catering by introducing hot party food, which has been well received by families (and children!). Our parties continue to be highly personalised, designed around the interests of each child, ensuring every celebration is both memorable and unique.

"Wonderful, well organised, great value for money and the staff were friendly, approachable and helpful"
Storybarn attendee

9. Criminal Justice

It's one of the only times during the week when I have that openness, touching with that deeper part of myself – even for an hour – it takes you out of that jail mindset. I feel like the group has helped me recognise some very real parts of myself.
Daniel, Young Offender Institution resident

Our team of Criminal Justice Group Leads have been busy running Shared Reading in **28** **Prisons and Approved Premises** through our national contract for the delivery of Shared Reading in PIPEs (Psychologically Informed Planned Environments). This year we were asked to start the first groups in PIPE settings that house residents with additional needs.

PIPEs are designed to have a particular focus on the environment in which they operate and actively recognise the importance and quality of relationships and interactions. Shared Reading forms part of the enrichment programme and one of the structured activities on offer.

We are also privately funded to deliver Shared Reading by three individual units, including a maximum security prison, a female prison unit and a Secure Children's Home for residents aged 10 to 17 years. In addition to these groups, in March 2025 we secured a new contract to set up Shared Reading groups at Opening the Box, a service at HMP Channings Wood that supports prisoners with personality disorders, neurodivergent needs, or learning difficulties, providing therapeutic and educational support.

Our network of community Shared Reading groups offer huge potential for those progressing through the OPD (Offender Personality Disorder) pathway and we aim to grow pathways, developing links between 'closed' settings The Reader works in (such as prisons), intermediary services (such as probation), and our community-based activity to enable people to access Shared Reading at any stage in their journey.

It's different from other groups. It has brought sensitivity and depth out of some people you wouldn't see it come out of – they speak about things you wouldn't hear on the wing. If you struggle reading it's fine, no one is going to judge, or knock you down. Sometimes I can't get words out so this is freeing. How a piece of writing is able to get people to open up the way they do is incredible.
Daniel, Young Offender Institution resident

Ben's Reader Story

The Reader has Shared Reading groups in community and Criminal Justice settings across the country. This Reader Story is from Ben, who has been living in an Approved Premises (previously called a Probation Hostel) for the last two months, following some time in prison. The setting's Shared Reading group has become an important part of his week.

I've been attending Shared Reading for about two months now, since the first week of moving into the Approved Premises. I came because when I arrived the Regime Lead of the house wanted me to go along and try something new, he said it would be a good way to get to know different people's views and opinions.

I enjoyed it and still enjoy it because it makes you think about the story, about what's being read, in ways you wouldn't normally. The author has their idea of what they're describing but you make the story your own when you imagine it. So everyone will have a different experience when reading or hearing it.

Shared Reading is a good way of switching off from what's going on with you, and escaping off into another world, but then when we stop and talk about the story you see where other people are actually coming from and the insights of what everyone else feels or sees is really interesting. It's also a relaxed place to be for an hour and a bit!

I remember when we read *Invictus**, yeah that stands out to me, because it was true and it was dark and deep, it didn't make me feel bad or good, but it made me think. Those two lines at the end I think about a lot.* When I said it takes you away, I mean after the session too, you might hear something that makes you think about the poem again and you escape again.

To someone who hasn't attended before I would say to them give it a few weeks, sit back and listen to the story, and then go away and think about what you've heard. Give it a chance. They will look at their life, not in story form, but as a way of reflecting. The group is non-judgmental, we focus on the story and everyone comes into the group the same. It's relaxed and you can go anywhere when listening to a story.

*Invictus by W.E. Henley

I am the master of my fate;
I am the captain of my soul.

10. Our commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

'I left feeling a little softer towards the world.'
Feedback from Project Participants

Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) work, including our commitment to addressing racism and racial diversity, covers all aspects of our organisation and focuses on how we ensure that:

- Our ways of working treat people fairly and enable everyone to participate.
- We can be more representative of our communities – considering our Board, staff, volunteers and participants in our work.
- Everyone coming to The Reader feels that they belong.
- Great literature from writers with diverse backgrounds and experiences is enjoyed across our Shared Reading and programming.

We recognise that creating meaningful and lasting change is ongoing and complex work, which raises questions and requires us to have conversations that feel difficult for many of us. We have miles to travel in terms of learning and in order to expand the racial diversity of our workforce and some of our Shared Reading communities. But this will not deter us from our commitment to building a diverse and inclusive Shared Reading movement, and ensuring that all our employees, volunteers and participants feel welcome and safe.

Progress in 2024/25 towards achieving these goals include:

- Following on from our 'Just Us' staff Shared Reading project, we rolled out new guidance and workshops for Reader Leaders on how to address race and racism in Shared Reading through their practice.
- We shared a new 'Just Us' anthology of tried and tested pieces that have been used and worked well to open up conversations in Shared Reading
- We set up new Monthly 'Just Us' Shared Reading Group for staff and Reader Leaders to open up and share this anthology
- Continued to focus on diversity in the literature we read, using our annual Bookshelf, anthologies and volunteer support sessions to promote use of diverse texts.
- Continued expansion of inclusive recruitment practices, including anonymising applications at shortlisting stage.

Regularly monitoring the diversity of our people and participants is a crucial part of our EDI work to help us understand who we are reaching, and how that changes over time.

We surveyed our volunteer community in Spring 2025 which showed 8% of our volunteers are of an ethnicity other than White, down 2% from the previous year. 86% of our volunteers are female. 18% identified as a D/deaf or disabled person, or had a long term health condition (up from 16% in the previous year). 5% identified with a sexuality other than heterosexual or straight (up from 3% in FY2324).

We continue to monitor the diversity of our **workforce**, both during recruitment and on an annual basis. In Spring 2025, 17% of our staff members employed through the charity identified as D/deaf, disabled or living with a long-term health condition 3% of charity staff and 8% of job applicants were of an ethnicity other than White.

20% of our charity staff identified with a sexuality other than heterosexual or straight, an increase on the previous year's figure of 14%.

31% of charity staff in 2025 identified as neurodivergent, compared to 28% in March 2024.

This year we partnered with The University of Nottingham on a project researching neurodivergence in relation to literature, aiming to help us ensure that our Shared Reading groups are truly open and accessible to everyone.

This AHRC-funded project began with a focus on the impact of 'invisible disability', and an interest in how this might currently manifest within Shared Reading.

The Reader team worked with the University of Nottingham to design and deliver three workshops for Reader Staff, Reader Leaders and researchers and professionals outside of The Reader who are interested in this work.

Feedback from the workshops documents the positive impact of this research collaboration on Reader Leaders' awareness of issues around neurodivergence; accessibility needs in Shared Reading; the need to identify particular texts and disseminate more specific 'Scenarios' and 'Reader Stories' centering experiences of neurodivergence for use in future training and support for Reader Leaders.

11. Mental Health

We continue to deliver Shared Reading on wards and in recovery settings across a range of in patient facilities throughout 2024/25, with an increase of **91 new active groups** across the North West and South East. Our mean group size has also increased from 5.9 (Apr-Jun 2024) to **6.3** (1 Jan - 30 April 2025).

Our priority remains to cement referral routes between hospitals, recovery settings and communities by mapping different channels and engaging with key staff, ensuring those receiving treatment can access consistent Shared Reading support wherever they are based and at whatever stage of their recovery journey.

Throughout this year, we have continued to deliver four weekly Shared Reading groups at Prospect Park Hospital in Reading, Berkshire, where Shared Reading continues to be considered an essential part of treatment by the Occupational Therapy staff.

These groups reach across the range of need from acute mental health difficulties to older adults and those living with dementia. Our two Berkshire community Shared Reading community groups continue to offer Prospect Park group members the opportunity to attend a community Shared Reading group once they are discharged from acute care.

"I want to feedback that this week's session was the best session of Shared Reading in the 10 years that I have worked here. There was a sense of psychological realism to the poem that all the group related to with the complexities around separation. Patients shared what the poem meant to them; overall it was exemplary in terms of therapeutic experience and engagement for patients."
Peter - Occupational Therapy Assistant & trained Reader Leader

Anna's Reader Story

Anna* is a patient at Prospect Park Hospital on Orchid Ward, and she has been coming along to the Shared Reading group for about four months.

It's my favourite group! I've been here at long time and my son was worried that I was spending too much time alone - you ruminate alone in your room.

If I'm here, I like to look for an activity; [Shared Reading] makes me think, it makes me reflect and it helps me to feel not alone.

It just feels such a safe space to be. I haven't talked much about the loss of one of my sons - but [in this group] I would be able to. It feels secure. It feels united. It feels connected. And also I have respect and admiration for those who don't feel confident to read. It gives space.

To find out more about our long-standing Shared Reading delivery at Prospect Park, listen to our special Podcast episode where we meet staff and participants and hear their stories.
Hear the Podcast

**This story has been anonymised*

12. English for Speakers of other languages

'I've just arrived and I don't know what awaits me, what path I have to take, and it's as if this poem has shown me myself'.

Group member at Our Liverpool ESOL Shared Reading Group at Calderstones

Our Shared Reading groups for speakers of other languages have grown this year. We now have 15 ESOL Shared Reading groups across the movement. Groups are taking place in libraries, at Calderstones and with partner organisations such as New Horizons, Dolphin Women's Centre in Birmingham, Borderlands Bristol and Changing Lives Doncaster.

Findings from 2024's Evaluation revealed high engagement. 93% of ESOL group members agreed that Shared Reading lifted their mood, 89% said hearing other people's thoughts gave them a new way of seeing things and 78% said Shared Reading helped them to connect with others in a deeper way. They were also more likely to say they felt it had a positive impact on their lives outside the group with 59% saying they felt more confident.

Our ESOL support sessions bring Reader Leaders delivering in this area together to share learning and best practice. This year we have produced a list of recommended literature for reading with people with English as an additional language as we continue to develop and strengthen our practice in this area.

"*Our group is very nice. All are kind and helpful. All the poems we've read are giving some emotions. We can explore more things we haven't known yet. I feel thankful to you, Shared Reading. It is fantastic."*

Nataliia's Reader Story

Former recruitment manager Nataliia, relocated to the UK from Ukraine in January 2023. Her home city of Polohy in the Zaporizhzhia region has been under Russian occupation since 2022.

While living in Skelmersdale, Lancs, she joined one of The Reader's Shared Reading group for speakers of other languages (ESOL). In November 2024 Nataliia moved to Liverpool where she now works for Refugee Women Connect as an outreach worker with new mums. She has also just completed her Reader Leader training and hopes to help run an ESOL Shared Reading group herself.

"For me the Shared Reading group was always my safe place where you are always welcome. Everyone really cares about you and supports you. It's the place where I started to feel able to speak more confidently in English. When I moved to Skelmersdale I did not have the Ukranian community around me and I was too shy to speak as did not want to make any mistakes. I had studied English at school, and my written English was good, but I had not used it for more than 10 years.

I first heard about The Reader's ESOL Shared Reading group in Skelmersdale from a community which supports refugees. To say that the Skelmersdale group is great is an understatement. They've become like family to me. I never missed a single week.

Sometimes we would discuss one line in a poem for 20 minutes and everyone would find something to say and share their ideas. Although we are all from different places, we have so many similarities and shared our thoughts with each other and discussed things happening in our own lives. We all really connected through the poems.

Some members of the group were from Iran, Iraq, Ethiopia, Egypt, Kurdistan, Sudan and other countries and many could not speak much English in the beginning. It was really nice you could see their progress week by week – putting all these English words in a sentence, it was so incredible. It really helped everyone.

I also went to ESOL classes at college but feel I learnt more from Shared Reading group as I felt it was more practical and useful.

I started volunteering with Refugee Women Connect and my job role came about so quickly. I moved to Liverpool last November and now work part-time as an Outreach Worker – working with peri-natal women. It's what I always wanted to do and sounds like a miracle. It's really magic.

13. People living with dementia

"I couldn't tell you what I did yesterday, but I'm alright with a book – I'd go to the group every day if I could."
Barbara, Shared Reading Group Member

The Reader deliver Shared Reading groups for people living with dementia and their carers from the earliest stages of diagnosis through to advanced treatment and acute care. We do this in a number of ways: By training and placing volunteers to lead Shared Reading within an identified setting, such as public libraries and community centres, providing accessible dementia support and ensuring that those living independently can access meaningful activity which improves wellbeing. Within care home or day care settings, we coordinate volunteers or train partner staff to deliver Shared Reading activities. Our work has shown that reading together with those living with dementia and their carers and family positively supports well being for both parties, offering respite and the opportunity for powerful, meaningful connection.

Of those attending a Dementia Friendly Shared Reading Group:

96% enjoy being part of their group

100% feel safe and welcome in their group

85% say 'this activity makes me feel better'

84% agree 'this activity gives me something different to think about'

This year has seen continued growth in our dementia-focused Shared Reading, with exciting new developments across the Liverpool City Region. We launched a new Shared Reading group at The Lighthouse Nursing Home in New Brighton, Wirral, averaging 10 people per session. Newly established partnerships with care home providers mean that new groups in Southport and St Helens are in the pipeline, as well as partnership with Liverpool City Region Library Services that will see four new dementia friendly Shared Reading groups established in Halton, Knowsley and St Helens community libraries. These additions build on the strong foundations laid in previous years, allowing us to reach even more people living with dementia in both residential and community settings. We're proud of the momentum we've built and look forward to further demonstrating the impact of this work.

Reader Stories from our dementia focussed groups

Watch our video about some of The Reader's Shared Reading groups for people living with dementia and their friends and family.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgGyjtmxk60



14. The Reader Bookshelf 24/25: Wonder

The theme for our annual Reader Bookshelf was 'Wonder' and it led to a year of exciting new literary discoveries and partnerships. From April '24 to September '25 over 1,100 Shared Reading sessions have taken place using a poem, story, extract, or working through whole novels from our Bookshelf. Claire Keegan's short novel *Foster*, Lucia Berlin's short stories and the essays of Kathleen Jamie (a recommendation from volunteer Reader leaders) found hundreds of new readers. The popularity with SR groups of Marghanita Laski's post-war novel *Little Boy Lost* with groups helped cement a partnership with the book's publisher, Persephone, who returned for a sold-out event at the Mansion and hosted a day of Shared Reading at their Bristol shop.

We formed a World Book Day partnership with Liverpool One, who purchased copies of the complete Reader Bookshelf for display in several locations in the shopping centre, as well as supporting a day of Shared Reading taster sessions. The benefit of the Bookshelf was expressed by one North West Reader Leader whose group (like several others) read the whole of *Frankenstein:* 'The group is still filled with "wonder" that the enjoyment reading this book together has brought.'

15. Our Volunteers

"I love walking into the room and seeing how ready the members are - especially when they're alert and eager to be transported somewhere new with the literature as their only vehicle. Hearing their thoughts and interpretations is incredibly gratifying. Everyone's contribution is valid, and it brings me joy to know they feel that too."
Christine, Volunteer Reader Leader

Our volunteers are at the heart of our national Shared Reading movement, giving time to choose, prepare and share great literature week in, week out. The rich and meaningful impact outlined in this report simply wouldn't be possible without their dedication, commitment and care.

At our home in Calderstones Park, our volunteers provide a warm welcome seven days a week, as they open the door to a programme of weekly Shared Reading groups, upcycling, and heritage tours and take care of our gardens – inviting everyone to come and explore what we have on offer.

We're delighted to share that in January we were re-awarded the Investing in Volunteers (IiV) Kitemark – the UK's gold standard for excellence in volunteer management. First awarded to us in 2020, this renewed recognition is a testament to our ongoing commitment to creating a supportive, welcoming and rewarding environment for all our volunteers.

Achieving the Kitemark was no small feat – it took 18 months of hard work and diligence from our volunteers. A special mention goes to the 50 volunteers who took part in interviews and shared their valuable insights to help us meet the rigorous assessment criteria.

We're proud to have met all six quality areas of the IiV standard, with particular commendations for:

The passion and dedication of our wonderful volunteers
How deeply embedded volunteering is in everything we do
Our welcoming culture and diverse volunteer opportunities
The high quality training and induction we provide

We're always looking to grow and improve; the assessment gave us valuable feedback on ways we can enhance our volunteer experience even further and we're committed to making those improvements part of our plans for the year ahead.

In 2024-2025 we supported:
144 (-15%) new Volunteers
488 (17.5%) active Volunteer Reader Leaders
93 (127%) active Reading Heroes Volunteers
179 (-25%) active Volunteers based at Calderstones

Irene's Reader Story

Irene is a volunteer Reader Leader at Swan Women's centre in Sefton which provides mental health support for women through counselling, group support, befriending and group activities.

When I got involved I knew that I had not made reading a priority in my own life. Researching literature and delivering Shared Reading has certainly helped me to turn this around. The experience has been good for my own mental health and learning - and I thoroughly enjoy promoting and sharing these benefits with other women.

I find exploring literature together creates a 'level playing field' for participants with different life experiences. The discussions that emerge can go in any direction, and each week I get quite excited at the prospect of where we might end up with these.

As we review what we have read in the group, I am just so enthralled by the knowledge, views and life experiences that the women bring to this, as well as their willingness to share these during our discussions. I have learnt so much from our conversations and feel privileged to be part of these.

It is also lovely to hear members of the group say how beneficial Shared Reading is to them and how it is a 'haven' from the other stresses and strains in their lives. It is for me too!

16. Our Home

Our home in Liverpool's Calderstones Park is a warm and welcoming community celebrating stories, creativity and nature.

Our work here delivers The Reader's mission by;
- Improving wellbeing through a creative community and the power of Shared Reading.
- Demonstrating how a creative model of health improves social connection and wellbeing.
- Generate income to support The Reader and provide opportunities for meaningful jobs and volunteering.

We are open 354 days a year and our estimated number of visits is **440,000** – an 11% increase on the year before. This year we hosted **689** **public events** including sessions in our magical play space The Storybarn for new parents and their babies, open air theatre, literary Deep Reads and masterclasses, themed dinners and ceilidhs and makers markets celebrating our local creative community. As the home of Shared Reading, we have sessions running daily alongside other free wellbeing activities such as Knit & Natter, gardening groups and upcycling workshops.

This year, we saw significant increases in footfall to our thriving Community Interest Company venues including our cafes and ice cream parlour and sold **88,890** **scoops of ice cream** – a 33% increase on the year before. The opening of a new cafe in our independent Bookshop helped us welcome even more customers and we made **140,528** **cups of coffee** – a 123% increase.



Watch our Winter season video



Watch our Summer season video

Barbara's Reader Story

Barbara volunteers at the Reader's independent Bookshop in the heart of Calderstones Park.

It was with some trepidation that I approached my first day in the wonderful Reader Bookshop. I knew I wanted to be there but was less certain that they would want me.

Then I met Reuben who was to become my shop mate. Reuben is 24 years old and has been volunteering at **The Reader** for four years – both in the bookshop and on the Welcome Desk. His encyclopaedic knowledge of subjects about which I know nothing and his incisive approach to technology, about which I know even less, was utterly reassuring. I immediately knew that his assets would fill in some of the gaps in my sluggish brain and that we could become a team. Even now I dread customers bearing book tokens but with Reuben at my side, I have nothing to fear. We will cope.

My volunteer experience has become an added dimension in my life and I would highly recommend the experience to anyone who may have doubts about their abilities.

17. Environment / Sustainability

The Reader recognises that its activities impact upon the environment through its routine internal operations, its infrastructure development, and through its influence and effects on the wider community. We take seriously our responsibility for, and our commitment to, protection of the environment at all levels.

As we work towards a net-zero strategy, in 2024-2025, some key achievements were:

- Switching our Recycling Waste Management contract, enabling us to receive detailed Recycling Reports every month and better take responsibility for improving contamination levels through data analysis. Extra recycling bins were also provided on-site.
- 100% of our waste was successfully diverted from landfill. Any waste that was unable to be recycled, was turned into sustainable energy through the RDF process.
- Invested in better food waste bins for all our kitchens, both staff and commercial, separating out waste that can be composted using our on-site hot composting facilities, and food waste to be composted off-site.
- 370 meals were saved using the food waste reduction app “Too Good To Go”, avoiding 999kg of CO2e being generated. .
- 1,342 kWh of solar energy generated since December 2024.
- Greatly improved our knowledge of a realistic carbon journey through Net-zero Consultancy, allowing us to create a set of actions to work towards and highlighting our major carbon contributors.
- Attending Sustainability Network meetings to share and build knowledge across a number of departments in the organisation
- Adapting our menus to use local seasonal ingredients to highlight local produce and reduce imported food miles.
- New flowerbeds installed in the grounds to encourage biodiversity and pollination habitats.
- Took part in “No Mow May” across the site.
- Our Upcycling Group received the ‘Zero Waste Community Fund’ from Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority for 24/25. The group gives new life to furniture that was otherwise headed to landfill.
- Our Litter Picking Group was launched, bringing staff, volunteers and members of the community together once a month to help clean up the park.
- Plant sales were at £3,558.40 for 24/25, with the money made going back into the gardening group to improve and maintain the space.

18. Looking ahead

Over the course of FY25/26, the team and Board will be starting to develop a new strategy for The Reader which will start in 2026.
Over the next year, we will continue to deliver four strategic goals, with some of our priorities listed below:

Goal 1) Develop Shared Reading for those who need it most

Objective: Meet Shared Reading delivery outcomes and build referral routes into adult Shared Reading community groups with a focus on pathways from inpatient settings in the South East and North West and pathways into Calderstones groups.

Priorities:
-Develop more direct referral routes into Shared Reading with a focus on social prescribing pathways and sustain at least 420 adult Shared Reading groups.
-Successful delivery of Reading Heroes programme and PIPES contract in justice.
-Secure new commissions from the NHS for Adult Shared Reading and for Reading Heroes expansion.

Goal 2) Open the treasure house of great literature to all.

Objective: Increase engagement of staff and volunteers with The Reader's reading resources and volunteer support and deliver a high quality, varied Calderstones public programme

Priorities:
-Ensure a robust and high-quality community of SR Practitioners through the Teaching Associate Pathway, the Reader Leader pathway, quality assurance framework and increase engagement with Support Sessions and Reading Records.
-Reach Storybarn and Calderstones programme engagement and financial targets.
-Ensure there is a high quality 7 day a week Shared Reading offer at Calderstones.
-Use our data to better understand our audiences of literary resources and our visitors at Calderstones.

Goal 3) Understand and talk about the impact of literature and Shared Reading.

Objective: By end of 25/26, all staff members and Calderstones volunteers will be able to confidently and authentically talk about Shared Reading and The Reader

Priorities:
-Create refreshed shared language and tools for staff and volunteers.
-Continue to develop and deliver our annual Year of Stories plan, highlighting areas of work.
-Conduct our bi-annual evaluation data collection across our Shared reading communities.

Goal 4) Strong Foundations
Objective: To improve the connectedness of our people (to our mission, our impact, our progress, our finances and each other) in order to work more effectively together to meet our targets and champion the work of The Reader.

Priorities include:
-Continued delivery of our EDI work, aiming to meet 3 year targets
-Implement new staff communications plan
-Deliver our digital priorities including contracting a new CRM partner
-Ensure strong governance, including inducting new board members across both CIC and Charity Boards
-Continue to deliver our financial strategy of increasing unrestricted revenue through our Community Interest Company and trading income streams.

20. Financial Review

The total income in FY2024/25 was **£4,586,647**, an increase from £4,354,896 in 2023/24 brought about by an increase in trading income. Calderstones Mansion House CIC realised a net profit of £46,205 during 2024/25.

The net expenditure for the year was **£296,422,** an improvement on 2023/24 which incurred net expenditure of £627,237.

In respect of the £296,422 net expenditure in 2024/25, the charity incurred depreciation costs of £250,187 in relation to the Storybarn and Mansion House, and the associated movements from restricted and designated funds to free reserves resulted in a deficit on charitable activities of **£46,235**, an improvement on 2023/24 which incurred a deficit on charitable activities of £361,042.

In these challenging times and following on from the previous year, trustees and the Directors Group had to make some difficult decisions to reduce expenditure in 2024/25 in order to secure the long-term financial sustainability of the charity, whilst looking to retain the

high level of impact The Reader’s work achieves. These decisions have led to an improvement in the year end net result.

Principal income sources

During 2024/25 The Reader Organisation's income was split across the following sources:

29% grants and donations for core activities
25% grants and commissions for delivery of Shared Reading (our principal charitable activity) and training of individuals to undertake Shared Reading
42% trading income, principally from our subsidiary, Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company and
4% event income from the Storybarn and programmed activity
<1% Investment income

Reserves

The Reserves now stand at **£4,935,028.**

Reserves include **£4,413,702** of restricted funds relating to Calderstones Mansion House which is reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year and will transfer to a designated fund upon satisfaction of restrictions within the grants.

The Group unrestricted funds total **£521,326**. This includes £215,100 of designated funds.

The remaining **£306,226** general unrestricted funds represents our free reserves.

Designated funds include:

- **£40,079** that represents expenditure on the Storybarn building which is being released over a 10-year period (the useful economic life of the refurbishments undertaken within the building)
- **£85,583** of designated funds that represents expenditure on the Mansion House building which is being released over 50 years (the useful economic life of the refurbishments undertaken within the building)
- **£89,437** Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund, a provision for future major repairs to the building

Reserves policy
The charity’s reserves policy is to build up unrestricted reserves sufficient to enable the charity’s core running costs to be continued for a period of three months, but where possible six months, should regular funding becoming unobtainable. Three months core running costs equates to around £298,374. As of 31 March 2025 the level of unrestricted, undesignated reserves amounts to £306,226 which equates to three months core running costs.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document (Memorandum and Articles of Association), the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

21. Funders & Commissioners

Arts Council England
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
Bury Virtual School
Camden Substance Misuse Services
City of Doncaster Council Public Health
Conwy Public Libraries
Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund
DWF Foundation
Garfield Weston Foundation
Hammersmith & Fulham Libraries and Archives Service
Hemby Charitable Trust
Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service
HMP Frankland Westgate
HMP Channings Wood
JD Foundation
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
Liverpool Virtual School
Livv Housing
Masonic Charitable Foundation
Medicash Foundation
Mersey Forest
Mind in Croydon
Oldham Virtual School
Our Halton
Players of People's Postcode Lottery
Queen’s University Belfast
Rayne Foundation
Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospital Trust
Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust
Sefton Virtual School
Segelman Trust
St Helens Library Service
The Leathersellers' Foundation
The Limbourne Trust
The Louis Nicholas Residuary Charitable Trust
The National Lottery Community Fund
The Rainford Trust
Tower Hamlets Virtual School
University of Bristol
West Lancashire Freemasons
Well Doncaster
YMCA Liverpool

Individuals and Groups:
Knit and Natter at Calderstones

Thanks to our community of individual donors for their vital support in helping to make Shared Reading accessible to all.

22. Structure, Governance & Management

The Reader Organisation is a registered charity and also a company limited by guarantee. It is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association that were updated and adopted on 13 November 2017.

The charity is governed by a Board of Trustees which must be made up of between three and twelve individuals. The board meets four times a year.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair)
Mr H Biddell (Vice Chair until retirement on 30th August 2024)
Mr P L Davies (Vice Chair from 30th August and retired from Board on 6th June 2025)
Dr R M Hussey OBE (Vice Chair from 6th June 2025 onwards)
Mr P K Sood
Mrs S Fletcher
Mr N Atkinson
Dr H Willows
Ms P Hughes (appointed 21st November 2024)

The company secretary is Ms J Martin.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute the sum not exceeding £10 in the event of a winding up.

Trustees Recruitment, Induction and Training

When a trustee vacancy arises a recruitment process including advertisement, application and interview as necessary is overseen by the nominations committee in line with good practice guidance. The Reader has designed a comprehensive induction for new Trustees that includes but is not limited to:

- A briefing from the Chair
- Meeting with other Trustees
- Meeting with each of the Directors' Group
- Shared Reading with Directors' Group
- Meeting as many Reader staff as possible at the first opportunity

This programme of meetings is accompanied by an induction pack that includes useful papers such as:

- The Reader's Business Plan
- Copies of previous Board minutes
- The Reader's Memorandum and Articles of Association
- Charity Commission guidance ‘Being a Trustee’ and ‘The Essential Trustee: What you need to know'
- A welcome letter from the Chair
- Trustee role description
- Latest annual report and financial accounts
- Vision, mission and key facts
- Information on conflict of interests

A Committee structure is in place to support the Trustees in ensuring good governance. During the financial year there have been two Committees in operation: (i) the Audit Committee, which oversees governance and risk (ii) the Nominations Committee which oversees Trustee appointments.

The Calderstones Mansion House CIC has its own Board of Directors. As of 31 March 2025 there were eight Directors on the Calderstones Mansion House CIC Board, four of whom were also members of The Reader Board of Trustees. Minutes of the Calderstones Mansion House CIC Board are submitted to and approved by The Reader Board as parent company. The Audit Committee oversees the work of Calderstones Mansion House CIC as well as The Reader.

The Trustees have appointed a Managing Director and Director of Literature to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity.

Objects of the charity

The charity's objects are to promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of citizens and inhabitants of the United Kingdom and other countries, in particular the advancement of education, the furtherance of health, the relief of poverty, distress and sickness, the promotion of social inclusion and furtherance of community especially through reading and literature based activities.

Senior Staff Remuneration

The Reader pays salaries according to a salary band system. Banding is based on the responsibilities attached to roles. No members of staff received remuneration over £60,000 in the financial year.

Staff and Volunteers

The trustees acknowledge the commitment and dedication of the charity's staff and volunteers which has been critical to the success of the organisation over the course of the year. Without the generosity of these people, who regularly go above and beyond what is asked of them, The Reader would not have reached as many people or helped change as many lives.

Investment Power and Policy

Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the charity has the power to invest in any lawful way the trustees wish, after having obtained such advice from a financial expert as the trustees consider necessary having regard to the suitability of investments and the need for diversification. All reserves are held in deposit accounts and no investments were made during the year.

Risk Review

The Reader is committed to sound business practice and the embedding of risk management into the organisation's culture. Both the Reader and Calderstones Mansion House CIC have risk registers that are used to gain a comprehensive view of the work of the organisations and reveal strengths and opportunities as well as weaknesses and threats. Risk assessments involve staff from across the organisation and the formal risk registers are reviewed by the Audit Committee at each meeting, with high level risks being reviewed by the Reader Board of Trustees and Calderstones Mansion House CIC Board of Directors. The risk register details the steps and procedures in place to manage and mitigate the risks.

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Payment of creditors

The company's current policy concerning the payment of trade creditors is to follow the CBI's Prompt Payers Code (copies are available from the CBI, Centre Point, 103 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1DU). The company's current policy concerning the payment of trade creditors is to:

- settle the terms of payment with suppliers when agreeing the terms of each transaction;
- ensure that suppliers are made aware of the terms of payment by inclusion of the relevant terms in contracts; and
- pay in accordance with the company's contractual and other legal obligations.

Trade creditors of the company at the year end were equivalent to 56 day's purchases, based on the average daily amount invoiced by suppliers during the year.

Auditor

At the Annual General Meeting in November 2016 it was agreed that a tender exercise should be undertaken for the appointment of Auditors to ensure value for money was being achieved for the Charity. This resulted in McLintocks being appointed by special resolution of the Board of Directors in May 2017. The Board undertook a further tender exercise in 2021 which resulted in McLintocks being re-appointed at the meeting in September 2021 for a three year period with review by the Audit Committee each year and option to extend to a five year period. The Board approved the contract extension for the fourth year, with the fifth year to be reviewed in November 2025.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

THE READER ORGANISATION

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The trustees, who are also the directors of The Reader Organisation for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:
- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

THE READER ORGANISATION

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE READER ORGANISATION

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Reader Organisation (the 'charity') and it's subsidiary for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the consolidated statement of financial activities, the consolidated and charity balance sheet, the consolidated statement of cash flows and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006
In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit:

the information given in the Trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, is consistent with the financial statements; and

the directors' report included within the Trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006
In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the Trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception
In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the Trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate and proper accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees
As explained more fully in the statement of Trustees' responsibilities, the trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group and charity’s ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with the Acts and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularties, including fraud

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the group through discussions with trustees and other management, and from our knowledge and experience of charity sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the group, including the Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2011, data protection, anti-bribery, employment, food hygiene and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management team and inspecting legal correspondence; and identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the group's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management team as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- reviewing correspondence with HMRC and relevant regulators.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006, and to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company, the charitable company's members as a body and the charitable company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Helen Furlong FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Xeinadin Audit Limited, Statutory Auditor
Chartered Accountants
46 Hamilton Square
Birkenhead
Wirral
Merseyside
CH41 5AR
13 November 2025

THE READER ORGANISATION

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Income and endowments from:							
Donations and legacies	**3**	1,365,288	-	1,365,288	1,209,165	8,646	1,217,811
Charitable activities							-
Shared Reading	**4**	946,494	253,397	1,199,891	845,058	381,170	1,226,228
Storybarn	**4**	117,300	-	117,300	102,073	-	102,073
Other trading activities	**5**	1,897,650	-	1,897,650	1,800,694	-	1,800,694
Investments	**6**	6,518	-	6,518	7,410	-	7,410
Other income	**7**	-	-	-	680	-	680
Total income		4,333,250	253,397	4,586,647	3,965,080	389,816	4,354,896
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	**8**	1,797,561	-	1,797,561	1,750,563	-	1,750,563
Charitable activities							
Shared Reading	**9**	2,573,371	253,397	2,826,768	2,596,749	389,816	2,986,565
Storybarn	**9**	258,740	-	258,740	245,006	-	245,006
Total charitable expenditure		2,832,111	253,397	3,085,508	2,841,755	389,816	3,231,571
Total expenditure		4,629,672	253,397	4,883,069	4,592,318	389,816	4,982,134
Net expenditure		(296,422)	-	(296,422)	(627,238)	-	(627,238)
Transfers between funds		205,660	(205,660)	-	205,660	(205,660)	-
Net movement in funds		(90,762)	(205,660)	(296,422)	(421,578)	(205,660)	(627,238)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances at 1 April 2024		612,088	4,619,362	5,231,450	1,033,666	4,825,022	5,858,688
Fund balances at 31 March 2025		521,326	4,413,702	4,935,028	612,088	4,619,362	5,231,450

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

THE READER ORGANISATION

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	**15**		4,542,882		4,795,067
Current assets					
Stocks	**17**	28,265		29,085	
Debtors	**18**	297,351		292,545	
Cash at bank and in hand		688,717		1,113,776	
		1,014,333		1,435,406	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**20**	(622,187)		(999,023)	
Net current assets			392,146		436,383
Total assets less current liabilities			4,935,028		5,231,450
The funds of the charity					
Restricted income funds	**25**		4,413,702		4,619,362
Unrestricted funds	**26**		521,326		612,088
			4,935,028		5,231,450

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 13 November 2025

Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair)

Company registration number 06607389 (England and Wales)

THE READER ORGANISATION

CHARITY BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	**15**		4,542,882		4,795,067
Investments	**16**		1		1
			4,542,883		4,795,068
Current assets					
Debtors	**19**	324,701		266,693	
Cash at bank and in hand		394,246		973,742	
		718,947		1,240,435	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**21**	(326,802)		(757,847)	
Net current assets			392,145		482,588
Total assets less current liabilities			4,935,028		5,277,656
The funds of the charity					
Restricted income funds	**25**		4,413,702		4,619,362
Unrestricted funds	**27**		521,326		658,294
			4,935,028		5,277,656

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 13 November 2025

Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair)

Company registration number 06607389 (England and Wales)

THE READER ORGANISATION

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash absorbed by operations	**33**		(409,562)		(84,853)
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(22,015)		(9,542)	
Proceeds from disposal of tangible fixed assets		-		4,515	
Investment income received		6,518		7,410	
Net cash (used in)/generated from investing activities			(15,497)		2,383
Net cash generated from financing activities			-		-
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents			(425,059)		(82,470)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			1,113,776		1,196,246
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			688,717		1,113,776

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Reader Organisation is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is The Mansion House, Calderstones Park, Liverpool, Merseyside, L18 3JB.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006, FRS 102 “The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland” (“FRS 102”) and the Charities SORP "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

The charitable company is a qualifying entity for the purposes of FRS 102, being a member of a group where the parent of that group prepares publicly available consolidated financial statements, including this company, which are intended to give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities, financial position and profit or loss of the group. The charitable company has therefore taken advantage of exemptions from the following disclosure requirements for parent company information presented within the consolidated financial statements:

- Section 7 ‘Statement of Cash Flows’: Presentation of a statement of cash flow and related notes and disclosures;
- Section 11 ‘Basic Financial Instruments’ and Section 12 ‘Other Financial Instrument Issues’: Carrying amounts, interest income/expense and net gains/losses for each category of financial instrument; basis of determining fair values; details of collateral, loan defaults or breaches, details of hedges, hedging fair value changes recognised in profit or loss and in other comprehensive income ;
- Section 33 ‘Related Party Disclosures’: Compensation for key management personnel.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the accounts.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

Voluntary income include donations which are accounted for as received by the charity.

These items are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability. Such income is only deferred when:

- The donor specifies that the grant or donation must only be used in future accounting years; or
- The donor has imposed conditions which must be met before the charity has unconditional settlement.

Investment income relates to bank interest receivable.

Income from charitable activities includes income received under contract or where entitlement to grant funding is subject to specific performance conditions and is recognised as earned as the related goods or services are provided. Grant income included within this category provides funding to advance the education of the public in reading and the appreciation of literature.

Grants received in advance of the period in which the funder requires the expenditure to be applied will be reflected in deferred income within the balance sheet.

Income from the trading subsidiary turnover represents amounts received and receivable for goods supplied (excluding value added tax an voluntary gratuities left by customers for the benefit of employees) and is recognised at the point of sale.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred.

Charitable activities expenditure includes both direct costs and support costs relating to these activities.

Governance costs include those incurred in the governance of the charity and its assets and are primarily associated with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Leasehold improvements	Over a period of 10 years. Mansion house refurbishment over 50 years
Fixtures and fittings	Over a period of 3 years. Leasehold fit out over 10 years
Computers	Over a period of 3 years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

All assets costing more than £1,500 are capitalised at cost.

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.8 Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value, after making due allowance for obsolete and slow moving items.

Net realisable value is the estimated selling price less all estimated costs of completion and costs to be incurred in marketing, selling and distribution.

1.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 ‘Basic Financial Instruments’ and Section 12 ‘Other Financial Instruments Issues’ of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.11 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.12 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

1.13 Consolidation

The group financial statements consolidate the financial statements of The Reader Organisation and its subsidiary Calderstones Mansion House CIC, drawn up to 31 March 2025. The results of the subsidiary are consolidated for the period from the date on which control passed.

Business combinations are accounted for under the purchase method. Where necessary, adjustments are made to the financial statements of the subsidiary to bring the accounting policies used into line with those used by the parent charitable company. All intra-group transactions, balances, income and expenses are eliminated on consolidation.

Advantage is being taken of Section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 not to present the Parent Company's Statement of Financial Activities including Income and Expenditure Account.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Donations and gifts	62,068	-	62,068	30,945	8,646	39,591
Grants	1,303,220	-	1,303,220	1,178,220	-	1,178,220
	1,365,288	-	1,365,288	1,209,165	8,646	1,217,811
Grants						
Arts Council England National Portfolio Office	178,220	-	178,220	178,220	-	178,220
Peoples Postcode Lottery	1,125,000	-	1,125,000	1,000,000	-	1,000,000
	1,303,220	-	1,303,220	1,178,220	-	1,178,220

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Shared Reading						
Commissions & Training	885,881	-	885,881	816,883	-	816,883
Grants	-	253,397	253,397	-	381,170	381,170
Events income	60,613	-	60,613	28,175	-	28,175
Storybarn						
Events income	117,300	-	117,300	102,073	-	102,073
	1,063,794	253,397	1,317,191	947,131	381,170	1,328,301

4 Income from charitable activities **(Continued)**

Grants related to charitable activities

	Shared reading 2025 £	Shared reading 2024 £
The Garfield Weston Foundation	50,000	45,833
Knowsley CCG	18,355	18,355
National Lottery Community Fund	38,330	25,000
National Lottery Heritage Fund		103,460
Reading Retreat	-	4,895
Swire Charitable Trust	25,831	
Cheshire West & Cheshire UK Shared Prosperity Fund	11,913	15,966
The Rayne Foundation	13,125	17,500
Steve Morgan Foundation and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport	-	6,666
Segelman Trust	36,200	-
Somerset County Council	-	24,371
Masonic Charitable Foundation	19,529	11,199
Unwin Charitable Trust	-	60,000
WBC - Wirral Borough of Culture	15,000	-
Other	25,114	47,925
	253,397	381,170

5 Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Cafe, ice-cream parlour and other income	1,897,650	1,800,694

6 Income from investments

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Interest receivable	6,518	7,410

7 Other income

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Net gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	680

8 Expenditure on raising funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Trading costs		
Operating costs	802,928	800,135
Other staff costs	2,215	1,323
Staff costs	992,418	949,105
	1,797,561	1,750,563

9 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Shared reading 2025 £	Storybarn 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Shared Reading 2024 £	Storybarn 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Direct costs						
Staff costs	1,626,083	114,522	1,740,605	1,834,393	110,750	1,945,143
Depreciation and impairment	-	44,528	44,528	-	44,527	44,527
Other expenditure	367,084	18,111	385,195	375,505	22,791	398,296
	1,993,167	177,161	2,170,328	2,209,898	178,068	2,387,966
Share of support and governance costs (see note 10)						
Support	813,728	80,478	894,206	759,416	66,036	825,452
Governance	19,873	1,101	20,974	17,251	902	18,153
	2,826,768	258,740	3,085,508	2,986,565	245,006	3,231,571
Analysis by fund						
Unrestricted funds	2,573,371	258,740	2,832,111	2,596,749	245,006	2,841,755
Restricted funds	253,397	-	253,397	389,816	-	389,816
	2,826,768	258,740	3,085,508	2,986,565	245,006	3,231,571

10 Support costs allocated to activities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Staff costs	388,969	345,447
Depreciation	229,673	247,467
Other costs	275,564	232,538
Governance costs	20,974	18,153
	915,180	843,605
Analysed between:		
Shared Reading	833,601	776,667
Storybarn	81,579	66,938
	915,180	843,605

11 Trustees

None of the trustees received any remuneration during either the current or previous year, and trustees were reimbursed £233 for travelling expenses (2024: £465).

12 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2025	2024
	Number	Number
Shared Reading	86	97
Support Services	11	10
Storybarn	13	13
Calderstones Mansion House CIC	65	61
Total	175	181

Employment costs	2025	2024
	£	£
Wages and salaries	2,838,637	2,910,578
Social security costs	169,772	194,076
Other pension costs	113,583	135,041
	3,121,992	3,239,695

12 Employees **(Continued)**

Retirement benefit schemes

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the Charity in an independently administered fund.

The charge to the statement of financial activities in respect of defined contribution schemes was £113,584 (2024: £135,041).

There were outstanding contributions in respect of defined contribution schemes at 31 March 2025 of £14,483 (2024 18,596).

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000.

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	291,194	381,570

13 Calderstones Mansion House CIC

A summary of the results of the subsidiary is shown below:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Income	1,852,507	1,732,339
Expenditure	(1,806,302)	(1,755,148)
	46,205	(22,809)

Aggregate assets and liabilities

Current assets	410,651	268,178
Current liabilities	(410,651)	(314,382)
	-	(46,204)

14 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

15 Tangible fixed assets - Group and Company

	Leasehold improvements	Fixtures and fittings	Computers	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost				
At 1 April 2024	4,915,912	1,331,216	31,476	6,278,604
Additions	-	19,628	2,387	22,015
At 31 March 2025	4,915,912	1,350,844	33,863	6,300,619
Depreciation and impairment				
At 1 April 2024	779,237	677,130	27,168	1,483,535
Depreciation charged in the year	134,143	137,402	2,657	274,202
At 31 March 2025	913,380	814,532	29,825	1,757,737
Carrying amount				
At 31 March 2025	4,002,532	536,312	4,038	4,542,882
At 31 March 2024	4,136,675	654,084	4,308	4,795,067

16 Fixed asset investments - Group undertakings

The charity owns the whole of the issued share capital of the following subsidiary undertaking which is registered in England and has the same registered office as the charity.

Subsidiary	Principal activity
Calderstones Mansion House CIC	Restaurants and cafes

The carrying value of the investment in the financial statements is £1 (2024:£1).

17 Stocks - Group

	2025	2024
	£	£
Finished goods and goods for resale	28,265	29,085

18 Debtors - Group

	2025	2024
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Trade debtors	102,368	117,121
Other debtors	73,942	53,378
Prepayments and accrued income	121,041	122,046
	297,351	292,545

19 Debtors - Charity

	2025	2024
Amounts falling due within one year:	**£**	**£**
Trade debtors	33,963	44,432
Amounts owed by subsidiary undertakings	115,265	73,206
Other debtors	54,670	34,106
Prepayments and accrued income	120,803	114,949
	324,701	266,693

20 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year - Group

	Notes	2025	2024
		£	**£**
Other taxation and social security		93,128	100,321
Deferred income	**22**	367,747	735,801
Trade creditors		103,366	101,990
Other creditors		18,988	23,004
Accruals		38,958	37,907
		622,187	999,023

21 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year - Charity

	Notes	2025	2024
		£	**£**
Other taxation and social security		34,696	50,305
Deferred income	**23**	185,278	599,730
Trade creditors		65,381	68,423
Other creditors		16,866	20,545
Accruals		24,581	18,844
		326,802	757,847

22 Deferred income - Group

	2025	2024
	£	**£**
Other deferred income	367,747	735,801

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	**£**
Deferred income is included within:		
Current liabilities	367,747	735,801

Movements in the year:

22 Deferred income - Group **(Continued)**

Deferred income at 1 April 2024	735,801	561,809
Released from previous periods	1,502,728	2,276,187
Resources deferred in the year	(1,870,782)	(2,102,195)
Deferred income at 31 March 2025	367,747	735,801

23 Deferred income - Charity

	2025	2024
	£	£
Other deferred income	185,278	599,730

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Deferred income is included within:		
Current liabilities	185,278	599,730
Movements in the year:		
Deferred income at 1 April 2024	599,730	433,334
Released from previous periods	1,178,023	2,008,193
Resources deferred in the year	(1,592,475)	(1,841,797)
Deferred income at 31 March 2025	185,278	599,730

24 Retirement benefit schemes

Defined contribution schemes	2025 £	2024 £
Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes	113,583	135,041

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund.

25 Restricted funds - Group & Charity

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

	At 1 April 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£	£
Shared Reading	-	253,397	(253,397)	-	-
Calderstones Mansion House	4,619,362	-	-	(205,660)	4,413,702
	4,619,362	253,397	(253,397)	(205,660)	4,413,702

Previous year:	At 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Shared Reading	-	389,816	(389,816)	-	-
Calderstones Mansion House	4,825,022	-	-	(205,660)	4,619,362
	4,825,022	389,816	(389,816)	(205,660)	4,619,362

Shared Reading
Shared Reading includes our core work of delivering shared reading groups. This is funded through grants and commissions (please refer to notes 3 and 4 for further information).

Calderstones Mansion House
The Calderstones Mansion House is the charities headquarters based at our site within Calderstones Park. Grants have been received from Heritage Lottery, Liverpool City Council, Tudor Trust and other funders to refurbish the building. The money for this project has been split between restricted funds and a designated unrestricted fund depending on the nature of the income received. Following the completion of the building works and satisfaction of the restrictions within the grants, the restricted fund will be transferred to the designated unrestricted fund where it will be reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year.

26 Unrestricted funds - Group

The unrestricted funds of the charity also include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

	At 1 April 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£	£
General unrestriced	355,005	4,333,250	(4,585,145)	203,115	306,225
Storybarn Building	84,608	-	(44,527)	-	40,081
Calderstones Mansion House	85,583	-	-	-	85,583
Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund	86,892	-	-	2,545	89,437
	612,088	4,333,250	(4,629,672)	205,660	521,326

26 Unrestricted funds - Group **(Continued)**

Previous year:	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
General unrestriced	739,528	3,965,080	(4,531,783)	182,180	355,005
Storybarn Building	129,135	-	(44,527)	-	84,608
Calderstones Mansion House	85,583	-	-	-	85,583
Grant funded fixtures	16,008	-	(16,008)	-	-
Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund	63,412	-	-	23,480	86,892
	1,033,666	3,965,080	(4,592,318)	205,660	612,088

Storybarn Building
The Storybarn represents the capital cost of the building. This fund will be reduced by the associated depreciation charge each year.

Calderstones Mansion House
The Calderstones Mansion House is the charities headquarters based at our site within Calderstones Park. Grants have been received from Heritage Lottery, Liverpool City Council, Tudor Trust and other funders to refurbish the building. The money for this project has been split between restricted funds and a designated unrestricted fund depending on the nature of the income received. Following the completion of the building works and satisfaction of the restrictions within the grants, the restricted fund will be transferred to the designated unrestricted fund where it will be reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year.

Grant Funded Fixtures
Included in the grants received for the refurbishment of Calderstones Mansion House was an element spent on fixtures and fittings. These were fully depreciated in the year to 31 March 2024.

Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund
The sinking fund is set up to provide a provision for future major repairs to Calderstones Mansion House. The agreed amount to be transferred each year from the general reserves is in the region of £21,000.

27 Unrestricted funds - Charity

The unrestricted funds of the charity also include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

	At 1 April 2024 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2025 £
General unrestriced	401,211	2,480,741	(2,778,842)	203,115	306,225
Storybarn Building	84,608	-	(44,527)	-	40,081
Calderstones Mansion House	85,583	-	-	-	85,583
Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund	86,892	-	-	2,545	89,437
	658,294	2,480,741	(2,823,369)	205,660	521,326

27 Unrestricted funds - Charity **(Continued)**

Previous year:	At 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
General unrestriced	762,924	2,230,451	(2,774,344)	182,180	401,211
Storybarn Building	129,135	-	(44,527)	-	84,608
Calderstones Mansion House	85,583	-	-	-	85,583
Grant funded fixtures	16,008	-	(16,008)	-	-
Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund	63,412	-	-	23,480	86,892
	1,057,062	2,230,451	(2,834,879)	205,660	658,294

Storybarn Building
The Storybarn represents the capital cost of the building. This fund will be reduced by the associated depreciation charge each year.

Calderstones Mansion House
The Calderstones Mansion House is the charities headquarters based at our site within Calderstones Park. Grants have been received from Heritage Lottery, Liverpool City Council, Tudor Trust and other funders to refurbish the building. The money for this project has been split between restricted funds and a designated unrestricted fund depending on the nature of the income received. Following the completion of the building works and satisfaction of the restrictions within the grants, the restricted fund will be transferred to the designated unrestricted fund where it will be reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year.

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Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund
The sinking fund is set up to provide a provision for future major repairs to Calderstones Mansion House. The agreed amount to be transferred each year from the general reserves is in the region of £21,000.

28 Analysis of net assets between funds - Group

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total 2025
	£	£	£
At 31 March 2025:			
Tangible assets	129,180	4,413,702	4,542,882
Current assets/(liabilities)	392,146	-	392,146
	521,326	4,413,702	4,935,028

28 Analysis of net assets between funds - Group **(Continued)**

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
At 31 March 2024:			
Tangible assets	175,705	4,619,362	4,795,067
Current assets/(liabilities)	436,383	-	436,383
	612,088	4,619,362	5,231,450

29 Analysis of net assets between funds - Charity

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £
At 31 March 2025:			
Tangible assets	175,385	4,413,702	4,542,882
Investments	1	-	1
Current assets/(liabilities)	345,940	-	392,145
	521,326	4,413,702	4,935,028

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
At 31 March 2024:			
Tangible assets	175,705	4,619,362	4,795,067
Investments	1	-	1
Current assets/(liabilities)	482,588	-	482,588
	658,294	4,619,362	5,277,656

30 Operating lease commitments

Lessee

At the reporting end date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Within one year	27,642	27,642
Between two and five years	110,568	110,568
In over five years	3,151,188	3,178,830
	3,289,398	3,317,040

31 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2024 - £1,600).

32 Company limited by guarantee

The charitable company is limited by guarantee and has no share capital. Every member of the charity undertakes to contribute to the assets of the charity in the event of being wound up while he or she is a member or within one year of ceasing to be a member for debts and liabilities of the charity contracted before he or she ceases to be a member, such amounts as may be required not exceeding £10.

33 Cash absorbed by operations

	2025	2024
	£	£
Deficit for the year	(296,422)	(627,237)
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(6,518)	(7,410)
Gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	(680)
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	274,200	291,995
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease/(increase) in stocks	820	(858)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(4,806)	34,574
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(8,782)	50,771
(Decrease)/increase in deferred income	(368,054)	173,992
Cash absorbed by operations	(409,562)	(84,853)

34 Analysis of changes in net funds

The charity had no material debt during the year.

THE READER ORGANISATION

England & Wales - Charity number 1126806

Accounts

Charity registration number 1126806 (England and Wales)

Charity registration number SC043054 (Scotland)

Company registration number 06607389 (England and Wales)

THE READER ORGANISATION

ANNUAL REPORT AND CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024



THE READER ORGANISATION

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair) Mr H Biddell Dr R M Hussey CB,OBE,DL Mr P L Davies Mr P K Sood Mrs S Fletcher Dr H Willows Mr O Alake Mr NI Atkinson
Secretary	Ms J Martin
Managing Director **Director of Literature** **Director of Finance, Governance & Commercial Planning**	Ms J Guerrier Ms K Clarke Ms V Hopton
Charity number (England and Wales)	1126806
Charity number (Scotland)	SC043054
Company number	06607389
Registered office	The Mansion House Calderstones Park Liverpool Merseyside L18 3JB
Auditor	Xeinadin Audit Limited 46 Hamilton Square Birkenhead Wirral Merseyside CH41 5AR
Bankers	Santander UK Plc Bridle Road Bootle Merseyside L30 4GB

THE READER ORGANISATION

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THE READER ORGANISATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

In 2023, we announced the theme of The Reader's Bookshelf 'Weathering the Storm'. Over the last year, this theme has felt relatable and pertinent for so many individuals and communities with whom we work, due to economic and social pressures as well as global events. Like many other charities and arts organisations, we have had to make tough choices about our priorities and our resources, whilst grappling with the uncertainties and challenges that make long term planning difficult. As we chart the organisation's route through these choppy waters, we keep The Reader's values, vision and mission as our anchor.

Our vision is of **"A world where everyone can experience the power of literature to help us survive and live well."** It's been inspiring to see our talented, committed volunteers and staff make this a reality this year – exploring stories with children and their families at the Storybarn, concluding our three-year heritage project with the installation of a new permanent artwork, creating our anthologies and podcasts, programming garden theatre at our organisational home at Calderstones, and delivering our national network of Shared Reading groups.

We are proud of the progress made towards our strategic goal of **developing Shared Reading where it is needed most;** for example, our Reading Heroes programme for care experienced children received new funding to expand and we commenced new work to embed Shared Reading across the mental health pathway.

In Liverpool, we are building a **community based on Shared Reading** in Calderstones Park to demonstrate how a creative model of health improves social connection and wellbeing. The opening of Calderstones in 2019 was a huge development in how The Reader achieves its mission of **bringing people and books together in welcoming places.** A varied programme of community activities is now underpinned by a thriving volunteering scheme and growing social enterprise which provide **meaningful jobs and unrestricted income** to support the Reader.

But there is so much more to do. In Liverpool alone, one in every 64 children were living in care last year. 7.1% of people in Great Britain (3.83 million) experience chronic loneliness, meaning they feel lonely 'often or always'. The waiting list for NHS mental health support is estimated to be 1.2 million people. Many people who come to this country seeking refuge don't find a welcoming place. 1 in 5 children don't have a book of their own at home. Many people, young and old, just don't feel that literature is for them.

When society is faced with such challenges and funding is tight, the pressure grows on arts and cultural organisations to prove their value. But it is in these times, that we all most need the community, the creativity and meaningful connections that this work fosters.

For years, The Reader has been quietly pursuing our mission of a Reading Revolution and developing a body of evidence which demonstrates reading aloud and literature's **power to transform lives**. We know that sharing the stories of what literature can do is more vital than ever before - to widen and diversify participation in our work and to secure the support we need to sustain it.

This report focuses on sharing some of the stories from the last year, and as always we are grateful to all the staff, volunteers and supporters who have made them happen.

Jemma Guerrier, Managing Director & Anita Marsland, Chair of Trustees

'And although the stories all had different voices, and came from different times and places and understanding, though some were shown, enacted or written rather than told, each one was like a puzzle piece which tongued or grooved neatly to another…'

From Potiki, by Patricia Grace

YEAR AT A GLANCE

496 active adult Shared Reading groups in the UK.

625 active Volunteers in the UK.

20,778 Shared Reading participants in the UK.

International Shared Reading now in **18 countries** with over **300** trained Reader Leaders.

Reading Heroes **expansion** outside Liverpool City Region for the first time, engaging care experienced children aged 2-15.

16,850 visits to the Storybarn, our magical multi-purpose playspace for children.

Launched new partnerships with Camden Council, Halton Borough Council and Alder Hey Children's Hospital.

Criminal Justice contract renewed to deliver Shared Reading in **28 PIPEs (Psychologically Informed Planned Environments)** across the country over the next two years.

Funding **secured** for Shared Reading across mental health pathway.

1,320 people attended our Christmas Story Trail.

Sold **11,500** tickets making us **£120,000** in ticket income.

1,297 children attended heritage school trips.

Launched our first **Christmas Appeal, raising £8550.56** to give the joy and life-long benefits of reading to vulnerable children through our First Page project.

55,000 followers across our social media platforms.

Concluded our National Lottery Heritage Fund **Heritage project** engaging our community through Shared Reading, events, anthologies, podcast, volunteering and the installation of our first permanent artwork, *Now We Sit With It.*

We now **recycle** more of our waste than goes to landfill.

Served **33,551** cups of tea, **62,998** cups of coffee and **66,942** scoops of ice cream.

Delivered **110** events, from weddings to wakes, and christenings to corporate away days.

Operated a welcoming public building seven days a week attracting over **395,000 visits**.

Published **37 new episodes** of The Reader podcast.

WHO IS LITERATURE FOR?

For everyone, but perhaps especially, for those who might think it is not for them.

The great library at Thebes in Ancient Greece bore the inscription, 'The medicine chest of the soul'. The idea that reading can do us good is not a new thought. Great books are available in all public libraries, but many people – often the most in need - don't realise great books exist for them. For example, Kim - a young woman in a Shared Reading group in a Prison told the Group Leader she thought poems 'boring and rubbish. Stories and poems make no sense. Pathetic. Crap. Stupid.'

Until one week the group read, 'Bluebird' by Charles Bukowski.

There's a bluebird in my heart that wants to get out
but I'm too tough for him,
I say, stay in there, I'm not going
to let anybody see
you.....

The effect on Kim was immediate.

'It's got my belly churning...I can feel it here. It's the best thing I've read. It's really good. It's like me really... that one... man, it got me!'

'You need it', as one of the members of the first Shared Reading group said to the group leader, *'but you don't know you need it'.*

Beyond the intrinsic value of books, the act of reading them together as a live activity, rather than in solitary-reader-isolation, can multiply their power and value. Great literature connects us and provides us with a space where the complex, mysterious parts of life can be sought out. The inner stuff is given a form and shape and new language is supplied for thoughts, feelings and struggles.

We are passionate about ensuring Shared Reading is accessible and available to everyone because we need more human connection, feeling, thinking and crucially more free and open conversation. We need to encourage a love of reading in children from an early age because it builds, in the words of our patron and Children's Laureate, Frank Cottrell-Boyce, 'the apparatus of happiness'. We need to keep on reading, together

Katie Clark, Director of Literature

"I am back to the old me"
Alison's Reader Story

Alison attends a weekly Shared Reading group which began at our home in Calderstones Park 15 years ago. The current youngest member is 23, and the eldest 98.

"I medically retired from work at the council after being diagnosed with Fibromyalgia. I was getting used to having a disability, had lost all confidence and did not want to go out.

I felt I didn't have anything to offer. A friend of mine said they were going to Shared Reading, so I went along too. When I first came to a group at the old Mansion House in 2013 I felt dead uncomfortable. I do not read aloud, I like to listen, and I never used to stay for coffee afterwards.

But eventually I started talking to people and realised how interesting they were. They inspired me. They all had interesting lives. Gradually I became more outgoing.

Shared Reading has been a bit of a journey for me. I am back to the old me and feel much more confident."

LITERATURE IS FOR ALL CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

"I don't think she's had anyone reading aloud to her in the way that I do it."
Daniel, a Reading Heroes volunteer

Since 2016, we've been successfully promoting the benefits of reading for pleasure for care experienced children aged two to 15 years across Liverpool City Region through our **Reading Heroes programme**. Reading Heroes sparks a love of reading for pleasure by pairing children with a highly trained volunteer to enjoy the magic of reading aloud together.

We were especially delighted this year to create **Tiny Heroes**, a new Shared Reading programme for **pre-school children, aged two to four**, commissioned by Liverpool's Virtual School. *Tiny Heroes* focusses on **volunteer led home visits**, full of the joy of story sharing, singing and nursery rhymes.

Funding from The Rayne Foundation has allowed us the opportunity this year, to take steps towards growth and expansion. We've been working on developing relationships with **Virtual Schools** throughout a wider geographic area, refining processes and structures, such as our monitoring and evaluation, and management of our data, leaving us best placed to expand Reading Heroes into new authorities in 2024.

Watch our video about the Reading Heroes project here – Reading Heroes (youtube.com)

"Her happiness just beams out of her"
Daniel's Volunteer Story

Daniel, a retired teacher, reads over Zoom with two siblings: an eight-year-old girl and a seven-year-old boy. Both enjoy reading aloud to Daniel, though he still gives them the choice of listening to him read if they prefer.

"Both of them are responding very, very positively to the idea of reading for joy. The girl particularly responds in a remarkably happy way. I mean, her happiness just beams out of her. This is her time to shine, as a reader, and also within the reading relationship that we have. Although she probably does read elsewhere, I think she has the freedom to expand in her imagination when we read aloud together.

That's the pleasure of reading a book aloud. But then all that pleasure found within books does lead us on, into a world of relationships, understanding and identification, and engagement in imagery and metaphor and philosophy. In a child's experience of the adult world, which certainly for many looked after children may be a frightening, bleak and dark one, the relationship with a Reading Heroes volunteer has a beginning, middle and end – a bit like a story. It is an opportunity for a relationship that, beginning to end, is wholly positive and wholly good. They can take that with them, and put it in that secret, special place where they put wholly good things."

LITERATURE IS FOR ALL FAMILIES

"Made my imagination run wild, LOVED IT!"
Family Fun Day participant

Our **First Page Project** brings the joy of story sharing and reading for pleasure to families across the North West, through collaboration with a network of trusted partner organisations. Our partners include children's centres, health providers and third sector organisations, such as Homestart, Refugee Women Connect and Kinship Carers who are trained and supported to embed The Reader's Shared Reading model within their services.

We delivered **16 Family Fun Days**, allowing parents and children to immerse themselves in our magical playspace The Storybarn, unleash their imaginations and explore nature.

Successfully ran **five Sharing Stories in the Early Years** training days for partner staff and volunteers, helping to support them to run a weekly story and rhyme group for under 5s.

Visited **nine community based storytimes** currently delivered by partner staff and volunteers that have been Reader trained. These visits included a Shared Reflection, providing ongoing support and ensuring quality in the Shared Reading practice of our partner staff and volunteers.

Delivered **four Stories for You & Yours Workshops** to build the confidence of parents and carers with Shared Reading.

The Reader team went out to five partner organisations, bringing parents and carers together to deliver 6 week cohorts of our Books & Babies groups. Books & Babies offers moments of calm and reflection to new parents through Shared Reading and hints and tips, along with a gifted book to support family Shared Reading at home.

Watch our video about First Page https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGgcXj_M4mM

The Storybarn is our magical playspace based in our home in Liverpool's Calderstones Park, and **welcomed 16,850 people** in 2023-2024. Here you'll find a team of trained Storyhunters, dressing up clothes, bubbles, a craft room and installations to stimulate young imaginations including a 12-foot robot, a hot air balloon, a tree house, a slide and of course, hundreds and hundreds of books.

This year we launched our popular new **Holiday Clubs**, for children aged 5-10, where **196 children** enjoyed our exciting and enriching activities during the school holidays. Our Our Storyhunters also engaged new communities and delivered Shared Reading sessions with over **600 people in one day** at the Spooky Welly Walk.

Whilst children with additional needs are always welcome, we also held **12 Storybarn Relaxed Sessions** to ensure that children with autism and sensory conditions can come and enjoy the magic of the space at their own pace and in their own way. Nine members of the Storybarn team attended **Autism Awareness training** led by Autism Adventures.

In addition, this year, we were able to deliver **BSL read along experiences** on request for Deaf visitors where an additional member of our team reads along using sign language to ensure that everyone can experience storytime together.

The Storybarn magic also went out on the road, reaching **1,068 children** though workshops focused on reading for pleasure featuring an exciting mix of interactive reading sessions, and games, all designed to help encourage a love of reading outside of the educational framework.

Watch a reading of 'I Want My Hat Back' using BSL
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hWxXqQp7SIQ

LITERATURE IS FOR ALL ABILITIES AND BACKGROUNDS

> ***"Since joining the group I felt the people sharing the stories saved me from hitting a dark place"***
> *Shared Reading participant 2023-2024 evaluation**

Breaking Barriers

The Reader wants Shared Reading to be available for everyone, and we are keen to reach those who do not see themselves as readers, because we know that Shared Reading can have an even greater impact for them.

Our 2023-2024 evaluation findings show that respondents who felt negatively about reading before joining their group **'strongly agree'** with every measure of beyond-the-group impact at higher rates than our reading community as a whole.

They also experience **significantly higher** rates of strong agreement than our community as a whole for certain within-group impacts, including: **the group lifting their mood** (74% compared to 58%), **connecting with others in a deeper way** (51% compared to 39%) and **feeling a sense of achievement** (58% compared to 45%).

From our twenty-year history, we know that the power of Shared Reading can help build connection between people from diverse backgrounds and grow our ability to think in different ways and better understand different experiences and perspectives. A key part of our model has always been that there is no pressure to read aloud or talk. If you want, you can simply come and listen.

"If we don't feel like sharing our thoughts or feelings we don't have to, but everyone knows and understands that, so you don't feel excluded, you still feel part of something."
Group Member

Our 2023-2024 evaluation showed us that 24% **of adult community group members identified as D/deaf, disabled or living with a long-term health condition.**

Over a fifth of them told us that before joining their group, *'I used to enjoy reading, but hadn't done it much lately'.*

"Zoom format helps connect and reduce my isolation as I'm immunity suppressed. Having a chronic illness, I can attend even when slightly unwell which lifts my spirits.. Zoom is vital for me to connect to community."
Group Member, 2023-2024 evaluation

We have been working hard over the last year to build partnerships which help get Shared Reading out to those who need it, and to think about ways we can adapt our resources to ensure that Shared Reading truly is accessible to all.

This year, we developed a new partnership with **Bradbury Fields**, a charity in Liverpool which works with blind and partially sighted people. Together we set up a weekly Shared Reading group at The Bradbury Centre where they are based. We provide all the literature we read in advance, so that it can be printed in braille and extra large fonts to make sure that it is accessible for everyone.

'It gives you perhaps a deeper insight into feelings. And I think that always helps with your wellbeing...I have found that it has a calming effect.'
Shared Reading participant at Bradbury Fields

Watch a video about the Shared Reading group at Bradbury Fields here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GUEh6J3r7RI

Understanding our Heritage & Diversity

The National Lottery Heritage Fund supported our **'Making Meaning at Calderstones'** project which ran from December 2021 to March 2024 and allowed us to engage our local community in the history and heritage of our organisational home in Liverpool.

Volunteer researchers were led by historian Lawrence Westgaph, exploring and interpreting links between The Mansion House and the slave trade. Part of this saw artist Sumuyya Khader produce the artwork, **'Now We Sit With It',** which was inspired by the research and is now permanently on display in the Mansion House.

Over **5,500 hours** were contributed by volunteers to this project, as new roles including Community Curators, Heritage and Literature Integration Volunteers, Heritage Researchers, Heritage Story Sharers and Heritage School Trip Volunteers were created.

This project also saw an increase in volunteers from ethnic minority backgrounds and with a disability, as well as engaging young people within our area. **1,297 children** attended a heritage trip at The Mansion House where they learned new heritage-related skills and the trip has become a permanent feature of the Storybarn programme.

This large-scale project also included: Heritage Open Days, a new park map and new signage celebrating the history of the trees in Calderstones Park, dedicated episodes on The Reader podcast and anthologies, **16 people's living memories being recorded as oral histories,** a new heritage focussed Shared Reading group being established, and a wealth of heritage-themed performances at our Garden Theatre.

The project was praised by Liverpool World, BBC Radio Merseyside, Culture Liverpool, partner third-sector organisations and schools who attended our trips. The impact of this project ripples throughout our space, with our increased understanding of heritage and this being embedded in our programming, visually displayed and on offer to visitors.

97% of people surveyed who attended a Heritage Theatre performance, Heritage Open Day or Heritage Family Workshop agreed that The Reader at Calderstones makes this area **a better place to live, work or visit.**

Our commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Whilst inclusion is integral to our work, we know that we can do more to make our belief that Shared Reading can be for everyone a reality.

In particular, we want to help ensure that racism is eliminated from the world and feel we have a small but vital part to play in that change. Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) work, including our commitment to addressing racism and racial diversity, covers all aspects of our organisation and focuses on how we ensure that:

- Our ways of working treat people fairly and enable everyone to participate.
- We can be more representative of our communities – considering our Board, staff, volunteers and participants in our work.
- Everyone coming to The Reader feels that they 'belong'.
- Great literature from writers with diverse backgrounds and experiences is enjoyed across our Shared Reading and programming.

In particular, over the period of our current three-year business plan which takes us to March 2026, we aim to increase the representation of black, Asian and ethnic minority communities in our staff team, volunteers and participants in our work by **50%.**

We recognise that creating meaningful and lasting change is ongoing and complex work, which requires us to have conversations that feel difficult for many of us and to raise questions that we might not yet know the answers to. But this will not deter us from our commitment to building a diverse and inclusive Shared Reading movement, and ensuring that all our employees, volunteers and participants feel welcome and safe.

Progress in 2023/24 towards achieving these goals:

- Adapted our recruitment processes to make them more inclusive.
- Diversified our recruitment networks.
- Began the development of an internal EDI training offer for all staff.
- Signed up to the Care Leaver Covenant, enabling ways to connect our opportunities with the care leaver community.
- Following on from our 'Just Us' staff shared reading project, we have worked to consult with staff, volunteers and group members to develop principles for Shared Reading practice in relation to issues around race and racism (and related EDI issues) that can arise in literature. As well as written guidance, we are developing Practical Support Workshops for Reader Leaders and a new 'Just Us' anthology of tried and tested literature for reading in groups.
- We continued to focus on diversity in the literature we read, using our annual Bookshelf, in-house anthologies and volunteer support sessions to promote use of diverse texts.
- Established twelve ESOL Shared Reading Groups for asylum seekers and refugees and/or those who have English as an additional language.

Read the full commitment here https://www.thereader.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/EDI-statement-for-website-April-2024-update.pdf

Diversity of our people and participants

Regularly monitoring the diversity of our people and participants is a crucial part of our EDI work to help us understand who we are reaching, and how that changes over time, ensuring that Shared Reading is in the places where it's most needed.

Our 2023-2024 evaluation showed, 18% of our **group me**mbers were aged under 50, with 36% between the ages of 50 and 70 and 47% in the 70+ age bracket.

71% of readers were female, and 28% identified as a D/deaf or disabled person, or had a long-term health condition. 7% identified with a sexuality other than heterosexual or straight. 12% of readers were neurodivergent.

In recent years we've had a particular focus on increasing the racial diversity of our reading community. In Spring 2024, we were 1% below our 10% target and pre-Covid position for group members identifying with a global majority background. However, data for our newest group members shows that we were successfully attracting a more diverse audience to our open community groups with 17% of those surveyed who had been attending for three months or less identifying as people of the global majority. This progress with our newest open community members is something which we hope to see reflected and built upon in next year's data.

The makeup of our **volunteer community** is broadly similar to that of our open community group readers in areas such as age, ethnicity and gender. 10% of our volunteers are of an ethnicity other than White, an increase from 8% in the previous year. 86% of our volunteers are female. 16% identified as a D/deaf or disabled person, or had a long term health condition, and 3% identified with a sexuality other than heterosexual or straight.

We continue to monitor the diversity of our **workforce**, both during recruitment and on an annual basis. In Spring 2024, 17% of our staff members employed through the charity identified as D/deaf, disabled or living with a long-term health condition, up from 14% in March 2023. 8% of charity staff were of an ethnicity other than White.

14% of our charity staff identified with a sexuality other than heterosexual or straight, an increase on the previous year's figure of 12%. We have seen a similar increase in our recruitment data (which spans applicants for both the charity and our Community Interest Company) where the proportion of applicants choosing a sexuality other than heterosexual or straight increased from 31% to 40%.

28% of charity staff in 2024 identified as neurodivergent, compared to 19% in March 2023. This increase in individuals identifying as neurodivergent was also reflected in the year's recruitment data, where rates increased from 19% to 32%.

LITERATURE IS FOR HEALTH & WELLBEING

We know that Shared Reading has health and wellbeing benefits for people at all stages of their mental health journeys, and we were delighted to receive funding this year from **Garfield Weston** and **the National Lottery** to build on our existing portfolio of work to break and prevent the UK's cycle of ill mental health, by building and testing local, replicable networks of Shared Reading support.

We want to develop referrals between groups at local points of care for consistent, trusted support at every stage of people's mental health journeys.

Across the year we established 50 new groups in communities, including:

- RASA Merseyside, supporting women who have experienced sexual abuse
- Social Adventures in Salford, a social enterprise supporting mental health and wellbeing
- Birmingham Hospital Staff well-being group

For 13 years, The Reader has been running the UK's only clinical Shared Reading group for patients with chronic pain. Taking place in Liverpool's Broadgreen Hospital, this group is a **pioneering intervention** and has proved highly successful as a useful therapy for people with chronic pain, alongside existing NHS therapies.

The group continued this year, alongside an online Shared Reading group for those with chronic pain. **We read with an average of six people every week.**

"Shared Reading does not reduce pain but it gives a huge boost to wellbeing and enjoyment of life. All my patients who attend the group tell me frequently of the difference it makes to their lives. As well as the known benefits of group working, literature itself has an independent effect. Shared Reading changes lives for the better."
Dr Andrew Jones - Consultant in Pain Medicine at Broadgreen Hospital, who helped establish the group.

"I don't think I'd be where I am today if I hadn't come"
Sammi's Reader Story

Sammi is a 50-year-old Liverpool mother-of-three and carer has been diagnosed with fibromyalgia. Since a fall which caused devastating injuries, she has been attending a Shared Reading group at Broadgreen Hospital chronic pain clinic for five years.

"Just after Christmas in December 2010 my family and I were going to visit my partner's brother when I had a bad fall. As we arrived at the house, I got out of the car and went flying on some black ice. I broke and dislocated my ankle.

Since then, I've had eight surgeries to try and fix it and been under the Chronic Pain Clinic to help me cope with the pain. In 2012 my mental health worsened, and it took two years before I was diagnosed with fibromyalgia. They told me about this group at the Chronic Pain Clinic five years ago.

I have always struggled with reading. I like books but I've never really read very much on my own as I am dyslexic. Shared Reading has been a good thing for me to get involved in. It's made a big impact on my confidence and understanding of literature.

In our group I was introduced to Patricia Grace's novel, Potiki, which is about a Māori community in New Zealand fighting to save their land. It has been my favourite book so far and was the very first novel I have read all the way through. It really connected with me as I related to the simple, community life it described – it's very me.
This book made me realise that you are sometimes just hit by certain things in life and it's just about working your way through all these different things. That really hit home.

...Every week before the group myself and another group member meet up to chat about our week. I find Shared Reading distracts and takes your mind off things. You feel like you're part of a community with like-minded people.
We all know how each other feels when it comes to coping with pain. You know without saying anything that everyone understands.

My head is in a good place now considering the pain I am in. I have gained a lot of positivity and realise I can read a novel with everyone's support. It may seem like a small thing, but it has meant a lot to me.
...I don't think I'd be where I am today if I hadn't come to this Shared Reading group."

A. S. Marsland

.....
Mrs A S Marsland MBE (chair)

Dated: 21 NOV 2024

THE READER ORGANISATION

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document (Memorandum and Articles of Association), the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities

Objects of the charity

The charity's objects are to promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of citizens and inhabitants of the United Kingdom and other countries, in particular the advancement of education, the furtherance of health, the relief of poverty, distress and sickness, the promotion of social inclusion and furtherance of community especially through reading and literature based activities.

Our Vision

We want a world where everyone can experience the power of literature to help us survive and live well.

Our Mission

The Reader is a charity that uses the power of literature and reading aloud to transform lives across the UK. Our volunteers and staff bring people together to read great stories and poems – creating powerful moments of connection. We call this Shared Reading.

In a world that feels increasingly divided, and with increased pressures on our mental health, Shared Reading offers us time and space to share what matters to us.

We read with children, families, adults in libraries and community spaces, people in care homes, people with physical and mental health conditions, those coping with or recovering from addiction and people in the criminal justice system. Our work improves wellbeing, reduces loneliness and helps us find new meaning in our lives.

Aims for our Calderstones home

1) To Improve wellbeing through a creative community and the power of Shared Reading.
2) To Demonstrate how a creative model of health improves social connection and wellbeing.
3) To Generate income to support The Reader and provide opportunities for meaningful jobs and volunteering.

Achievements and performance
Our four Strategic Goals for 2024-2025

Goal 1) Develop Shared Reading for those who need it most

Objective: Meet Shared Reading delivery outcomes and build referral routes into adult Shared Reading community groups with a focus on pathways from inpatient settings in the South East and North West and pathways into Calderstones groups.

Priorities:

- Develop more direct referral routes into Shared Reading with a focus on social prescribing pathways and reaching 420 adult Shared Reading groups.
- Successful delivery of Reading Heroes and PIPES contracts.
- Secure new commissions from NHS for Adult Shared Reading and for Reading Heroes expansion.
- Refine Big Day Out/Front Door Key scheme to widen access to Calderstones activities

Goal 2) Open the treasure house of literature to all.

Objective: Increase engagement of staff and volunteers with The Reader's resource and support offer and create a high quality, varied Calderstones programme, ensuring all Shared Reading practice & programme delivery is of a consistently high standard.

Priorities:

- Ensure a robust and high-quality community of SR Practitioners through TAP, Reader Leader pathway, quality assurance framework and increasing engagement with Support sessions and reading records.
- Reach Storybarn and Calderstones programme engagement and financial targets.
- Ensure there is a high quality 7 day a week Shared reading offer at Calderstones.
- Use our data to better understand our audiences of literary resources and our visitors at Calderstones.

Goal 3) Understand and talk about the impact of literature and Shared Reading.

Objective: By end of 24/25, all staff members and Calderstones volunteers will be able to confidently and authentically talk about Shared Reading and The Reader

Priorities:

- Create shared language and tools for staff and volunteers.
- Continue to develop and deliver our annual Year of Stories plan, highlighting areas of work.
- Dig deeper into evaluation findings and develop the story and profile of our impact.

Goal 4) Strong Foundations

Objective: To improve the connectedness of our people (to our mission, our impact, our progress, our finances and each other) in order to work more effectively together to meet our targets and champion the work of The Reader.

Priorities:

- Commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
- Improved staff communications
- Digital transformation
- Robust finances
- Strong governance
- Environmental sustainability

Environmental Policy

The Reader recognises that its activities impact upon the environment through its routine internal operations, its infrastructure development, and through its influence and effects on the wider community. We take seriously our responsibility for, and our commitment to, protection of the environment at all levels.

As we work towards a net-zero strategy, in 2023-2024, some key achievements were:

- Changing our Waste Management contract, enabling us to retrieve Recycling Reports every quarter and better take responsibility for improving contamination levels through data analysis, leading to more waste being recycled than going to landfill. (for the first time in our organisational history)
- Implement a new recycling system for our offices. Creating a cultural shift towards recycling at work and reducing contamination levels.
- Food caddies are in all of our kitchens, both staff and commercial, to be disposed of in our onsite hot composting facilities.
- "Too Good To Go" established thus avoiding a total of 531kg of C02 from 197 meals saved from landfill to date.
- Joined a trial of Arts Green Book Toolkit, providing access to expert knowledge and working alongside other cultural organisations to reach baseline accreditation.
- Greatly improved our knowledge of a realistic carbon journey through Net-zero Consultancy, allowing us to create a set of actions to work towards and highlighting our major carbon contributors.
- Attending Sustainability Network meetings to share and build knowledge across a number of departments in the organisation
- Undertaking a review of all of our commercial suppliers and changed numerous to reduce food miles for deliveries
- Adapting our menus to use local seasonal ingredients to highlight local produce and reduce imported food miles.
- Planted wildflower meadow in the grounds to encourage biodiversity and pollination habitats.
- Took part in "No Mow May" across the site.
- Using based packaging across all of our in-house products from Cafes and Ice Cream Parlour.
- Continued our popular Upcycling Group which gives new life to furniture that was headed to landfill.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The total income in FY2023/24 was **£4,354,896**, an increase from £4,241,373 in 2022/23 brought about by an increase in trading income.

The net expenditure for the year is **£627,237** however the charity incurred depreciation costs of £266,105 in relation to the Storybarn, Mansion House and grant funded fixtures and the associated movements from restricted and designated funds to free reserves resulted in a deficit on charitable activities of £361,042, inclusive of a net loss in the sum of £22,809 from Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company.

Principle income sources

During 2023/24 The Reader Organisation's income was split across the following sources:

28% grants and donations for core activities
28% grant and commissioned delivery of Shared Reading (our principal charitable activity) and training of individuals to undertake Shared Reading
41% trading income from our subsidiary, Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company
3% event income (principally from the Storybarn)
<1% Investment income

Reserves

The Reserves now stand at **£5,231,451.**

Reserves include **£4,619.362** of restricted funds relating to Calderstones Mansion House which is reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year and will transfer to a designated fund upon satisfaction of restrictions within the grants.

The Group unrestricted funds total **£612.089**. This includes £257,083 of designated funds. The remaining £355,006 general unrestricted funds represents our free reserves.

Designated funds include:

£84,608 that represents expenditure on the Storybarn building which is being released over a 10-year period (the useful economic life of the refurbishments undertaken within the building)

£85,583 of designated funds that represents expenditure on the Mansion House building which is being released over 50 years (the useful economic life of the refurbishments undertaken within the building)

£86,892 Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund, a provision for future major repairs to the building

Reserves policy

The charity's reserves policy is to build up unrestricted reserves sufficient to enable the charity's core running costs to be continued for a period of three months, but where possible six months, should regular funding becoming unobtainable. Three months core running costs equates to around £336,426. As of 31 March 2024 the level of unrestricted, undesignated reserves amounts to £355,006 which equates to three months core running costs.

Public Benefit

Activities provided by The Reader are funded by: public sector bodies; charitable trusts; partner organisation; and donations. Weekly Shared Reading Groups are free at the point of entry and the Programme at Calderstones is a mixture of paid ticketed events and free community activity. The trustees have paid due regard to guidance published by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

FUNDERS AND COMMISSIONERS
Alder Hey Children's NHS Foundation Trust
Arts Council England
Barton Moss Secure Care Centre
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
BDB Pittmans LLP
Bury Virtual School
NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board
Cheshire West and Chester UK Shared Prosperity Fund (Communities and Place Grant)
City of Doncaster Council Public Health
Conwy Libraries
Dorset Council Libraries
Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund
Elizabeth L Rathbone Charitable Trust
Garfield Weston Foundation
Hammersmith & Fulham Libraries and Archives Service
Haringey Council
Hemby Charitable Trust
Highway One Trust
HMP Kirklevington Grange Prison
Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service
Jewish Care
John Lewis and Partners Liverpool
Livv Housing
Liverpool Virtual School
Masonic Charitable Foundation
West Lancashire Freemasons
Welsh Government National Library of Wales
National Literacy Trust
Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board
Northern Ireland Public Health Agency
Notting Hill Genesis
Players of People's Postcode Lottery
Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospital Trust
Richmond Integrated Card Board
Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust
Sefton Council UK Prosperity Fund
Sefton Virtual School
Segelman Trust
Somerset Council Adult Social Care
Croydon Relief in Need
The Granada Foundation
The National Lottery Community Fund
The National Lottery Heritage Fund
The Rayne Foundation
The Swire Charitable Trust
St Giles Trust
University of Bristol
Unwin Charitable Trust
Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Wirral Borough of Culture
Woodchurch High School

Individuals and Groups:
Knit and Natter at Calderstones

Thanks to our community of individual donors for their vital support in helping to make Shared Reading accessible to all.

Investment Power and Policy

Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the charity has the power to invest in any lawful way the trustees wish, after having obtained such advice from a financial expert as the trustees consider necessary having regard to the suitability of investments and the need for diversification. All reserves are held in deposit accounts and no investments were made during the year.

Risk Review

The Reader is committed to sound business practice and the embedding of risk management into the organisation's culture. Both the Reader and the Calderstones Mansion House CIC have risk registers that are used to gain a comprehensive view of the work of the organisations, and reveals strengths and opportunities as well as weaknesses. Risk assessments involve staff from across the organisation and the formal risk registers are reviewed by the Audit Committee at each meeting, with high level risks being reviewed by the Board. The register details the steps and procedures in place to mitigate the risks.

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Structure, governance and management

The Reader Organisation is a registered charity and also a company limited by guarantee. It is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association that were updated and adopted on the 13th November 2017.

The charity is governed by a Board of Trustees which must be made up of between three and twelve individuals. The board meets four times a year.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair)
Mr H Biddell
Dr R M Hussey CB,OBE,DL
Mr P L Davies
Mr P K Sood
Mrs S Fletcher
Dr H Willows
Mr O Alake
Mr NI Atkinson

The company secretary is Jennifer Martin.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute the sum not exceeding £10 in the event of a winding up.

Trustees Recruitment, Induction and Training

When a trustee vacancy arises a recruitment process including advertisement, application and interview as necessary is overseen by the nominations committee in line with good practice guidance. The Reader has designed a comprehensive induction for new Trustees that includes but is not limited to:

- A briefing from the Chair
- Meeting with other Trustees
- Meeting with each of the Directors' Group
- Shared Reading with Directors' Group
- Meeting as many Reader staff as possible at the first opportunity

This programme of meetings is accompanied by an induction pack that includes useful papers such as:

- The Reader's Business Plan
- Copies of previous Board minutes
- The Reader's Memorandum and Articles of Association
- Charity Commission guidance 'Being a Trustee' and 'The Essential Trustee: What you need to know'
- A welcome letter from the Chair
- Trustee role description
- Latest annual report and final accounts
- Vision, mission and key facts
- Information on conflict of interests

A Committee structure is in place to support the Trustees in ensuring good governance. During the financial year there have been two Committees in operation: (i) the Audit Committee, which oversees governance and risk (ii) the Nominations Committee which oversees Trustee appointments.

The Calderstones Mansion House CIC has its own Board of seven Directors. There are four members of The Reader Board who sit on the Calderstones CIC Board of Directors. Minutes of the CIC Board are submitted to The Reader Board as parent company. The Audit Committee oversees the work of Calderstones Mansion House CIC as well as The Reader.

The Trustees have appointed an Executive Director to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity.

Senior Staff Remuneration

The Reader pays salaries according to a salary band system. Banding is based on the responsibilities attached to roles. One member of staff received remuneration over £60,000 in the financial year.

Staff and Volunteers

The trustees acknowledge the commitment and dedication of the charity's staff and volunteers which has been critical to the success of the organisation over the course of the year. Without the generosity of these people, who regularly go above and beyond what is asked of them, The Reader would not have reached as many people or helped change as many lives.

Auditor

At the Annual General Meeting in November 2016 it was agreed that a tender exercise should be undertaken for the appointment of Auditors to ensure value for money was being achieved for the Charity. This resulted in McLintocks (now Xeinadin Audit Limited) being appointed by special resolution of the Board of Directors in May 2017. The Board undertook a further tender exercise in 2021 which resulted in McLintocks (now Xeinadin Audit Limited) being re-appointed at the meeting in September 2021 for a three year period with review by the Audit Committee each year and option to extend to a five year period.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

The Trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

A. S. Marsland

Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair)

Dated: 21 November 2024

THE READER ORGANISATION

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The trustees, who are also the directors of The Reader Organisation for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company Law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;

- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

THE READER ORGANISATION

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF THE READER ORGANISATION

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Reader Organisation (the 'charity') and it's subsidiary for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the consolidated statement of financial activities, the consolidated and charity balance sheet, the consolidated statement of cash flows and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group and charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the Trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the Trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate and proper accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of Trustees' responsibilities, the trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group and charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with the Acts and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the group through discussions with trustees and other management, and from our knowledge and experience of charity sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the group, including the Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2011, data protection, anti-bribery, employment, food hygiene and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management team and inspecting legal correspondence; and identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the group's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management team as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- reviewing correspondence with HMRC and relevant regulators.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)
TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF THE READER ORGANISATION

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and to the regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company, the charitable company's members as a body,and the charitable company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Helen Furlong FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Xeinadin Audit Limited

21 November 2024

Statutory Auditor

46 Hamilton Square
Birkenhead
Wirral
Merseyside
CH41 5AR

THE READER ORGANISATION

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Income and endowments from:							
Donations and legacies	3	1,209,165	8,646	1,217,811	1,435,503	225	1,435,728
Charitable activities	4	947,131	381,170	1,328,301	783,133	543,631	1,326,764
Other trading activities	5	1,800,694	-	1,800,694	1,471,576	-	1,471,576
Investments	6	7,410	-	7,410	2,091	-	2,091
Other income	7	680	-	680	5,214	-	5,214
Total income		3,965,080	389,816	4,354,896	3,697,517	543,856	4,241,373
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	8	1,750,563	-	1,750,563	1,439,377	-	1,439,377
Charitable activities	9	2,841,754	389,816	3,231,570	2,928,916	543,856	3,472,772
Total resources expended		4,592,317	389,816	4,982,133	4,368,293	543,856	4,912,149
Net outgoing resources before transfers		(627,237)	-	(627,237)	(670,776)	-	(670,776)
Gross transfers between funds		205,660	(205,660)	-	205,732	(205,732)	-
Net expenditure for the year/ Net movement in funds		(421,577)	(205,660)	(627,237)	(465,044)	(205,732)	(670,776)
Fund balances at 1 April 2023		1,033,666	4,825,022	5,858,688	1,498,962	5,030,754	6,529,716
Fund balances at 31 March 2024		612,089	4,619,362	5,231,451	1,033,918	4,825,022	5,858,940

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

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

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

THE READER ORGANISATION

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	**15**		4,795,067		5,081,355
Current assets					
Stocks	**17**	29,085		28,227	
Debtors	**18**	292,545		327,119	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,113,776		1,196,246	
		1,435,406		1,551,592	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**21**	(999,022)		(774,007)	
Net current assets			436,384		777,585
Total assets less current liabilities			5,231,451		5,858,940
Income funds					
Restricted funds	**26**		4,619,362		4,825,022
Unrestricted funds	**28**		612,089		1,033,918
			5,231,451		5,858,940

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 21 November 2024

A S Marsland

Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair)
Trustee

Company Registration No. 06607389

THE READER ORGANISATION

CHARITY BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	**15**		4,795,067		5,081,355
Investments	**16**		1		1
			4,795,068		5,081,356
Current assets					
Debtors falling due within one year	**19**	266,693		554,981	
Cash at bank and in hand		973,742		776,570	
		1,240,435		1,331,551	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**22**	(757,847)		(530,824)	
Net current assets			482,588		800,727
Total assets less current liabilities			5,277,656		6,486,757
Income funds					
Restricted funds	**26**		4,619,362		4,825,021
Unrestricted funds	**29**		658,294		1,057,062
			5,277,656		5,882,083

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 21 November 2024

A. S. Marsland

Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair)
Trustee

Company Registration No. 06607389

THE READER ORGANISATION

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash absorbed by operations	34		(84,853)		(459,562)
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(9,542)		(38,878)	
Proceeds on disposal of tangible fixed assets		4,515		3,630	
Interest received		7,410		2,091	
Net cash generated from/(used in) investing activities			2,383		(33,157)
Financing activities					
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents			(82,470)		(492,719)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			1,196,246		1,688,965
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			1,113,776		1,196,246

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Reader Organisation is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is The Mansion House, Calderstones Park, Liverpool, Merseyside, L18 3JB.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended), FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

The charitable company is a qualifying entity for the purposes of FRS 102, being a member of a group where the parent of that group prepares publicly available consolidated financial statements, including this company, which are intended to give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities, financial position and profit or loss of the group. The charitable company has therefore taken advantage of exemptions from the following disclosure requirements for parent company information presented within the consolidated financial statements:

- Section 7 'Statement of Cash Flows': Presentation of a statement of cash flow and related notes and disclosures;
- Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instrument Issues': Carrying amounts, interest income/expense and net gains/losses for each category of financial instrument; basis of determining fair values; details of collateral, loan defaults or breaches, details of hedges, hedging fair value changes recognised in profit or loss and in other comprehensive income ;
- Section 33 'Related Party Disclosures': Compensation for key management personnel.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the accounts.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

Voluntary income include donations which are accounted for as received by the charity.

These items are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability. Such income is only deferred when:

- The donor specifies that the grant or donation must only be used in future accounting years; or
- The donor has imposed conditions which must be met before the charity has unconditional settlement.

Investment income relates to bank interest receivable.

Income from charitable activities includes income received under contract or where entitlement to grant funding is subject to specific performance conditions and is recognised as earned as the related goods or services are provided. Grant income included within this category provides funding to advance the education of the public in reading and the appreciation of literature.

Grants received in advance of the period in which the funder requires the expenditure to be applied will be reflected in deferred income within the balance sheet.

Income from the trading subsidiary turnover represents amounts received and receivable for goods supplied (excluding value added tax an voluntary gratuities left by customers for the benefit of employees) and is recognised at the point of sale.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred.

Charitable activities expenditure includes both direct costs and support costs relating to these activities.

Governance costs include those incurred in the governance of the charity and its assets and are primarily associated with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Leasehold improvements	Over a period of 10 years. Mansion house refurbishment over 50 years
Fixtures and fittings	Over a period of 3 years. Leasehold fit out over 10 years
Computers	Over a period of 3 years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

All assets costing more than £1,500 are capitalised at cost.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.7 Fixed asset investments

Fixed asset investments are initially measured at transaction price excluding transaction costs, and are subsequently measured at fair value at each reporting date. Changes in fair value are recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year. Transaction costs are expensed as incurred.

A subsidiary is an entity controlled by the charity. Control is the power to govern the financial and operating policies of the entity so as to obtain benefits from its activities.

1.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.9 Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value, after making due allowance for obsolete and slow moving items.

Net realisable value is the estimated selling price less all estimated costs of completion and costs to be incurred in marketing, selling and distribution.

1.10 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.11 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.12 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.13 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

1.14 Consolidation

The group financial statements consolidate the financial statements of The Reader Organisation and its subsidiary Calderstones Mansion House CIC, drawn up to 31 March 2024. The results of the subsidiary are consolidated for the period from the date on which control passed.

Business combinations are accounted for under the purchase method. Where necessary, adjustments are made to the financial statements of the subsidiary to bring the accounting policies used into line with those used by the parent charitable company. All intra-group transactions, balances, income and expenses are eliminated on consolidation.

Advantage is being taken of Section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 not to present the Parent Company's Statement of Financial Activities including Income and Expenditure Account.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2024	**2024**	**2024**	**2023**	2023	**2023**
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**	£	**£**
Donations and gifts	14,109	225	14,334	28,940	-	28,940
Grants receivable for core activities	1,178,220	-	1,178,220	1,123,693	-	1,123,693
	1,209,165	8,646	1,217,811	1,152,633	-	1,152,633

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2024	**2024**	**2024**	**2023**	2023	2023
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**	£	£
Grants receivable for core activities						
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	-	-	-	25,933	-	25,933
Arts Council England National Portfolio Office	178,220	-	178,220	178,220	-	178,220
People's Postcode Lottery	1,000,000	-	1,000,000	879,072	-	879,072
CJRS grant	-	-	-	468	-	468
Tudor Trust	-	-	-	40,000	-	40,000
	1,178,220	-	1,178,220	1,123,693	-	1,123,693

4 Charitable activities

	Shared reading 2024	Storybarn 2024	Total 2024	Shared reading 2023	Storybarn 2023	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Commissions & Training	816,883	-	816,883	674,410	-	674,410
Grants	381,170	-	381,170	543,631	-	543,631
Events income	28,175	102,073	130,248	14,725	93,998	108,723
	1,226,228	102,073	1,328,301	1,232,766	93,998	1,326,764
Analysis by fund						
Unrestricted funds	845,058	102,073	947,131	689,135	93,998	783,133
Restricted funds	381,170	-	381,170	543,631	-	543,631
	1,226,228	102,073	1,328,301	1,232,766	93,998	1,326,764
Grants related to charitable activities						
The Garfield Weston Foundation	45,833	-	45,833	-	-	-
Knowsley CCG	18,355	-	18,355	18,030	-	18,030
National Lottery Community Fund	25,000	-	25,000	-	-	-
National Lottery Heritage Fund	103,460	-	103,460	119,700	-	119,700
Reading Retreat	4,895	-	4,895	26,555	-	26,555
City Bridge	-	-	-	25,457	-	25,457
Cheshire West & Cheshire UK Shared Prosperity Fund	15,966	-	15,966	-	-	-
The Rayne Foundation	17,500	-	17,500	-	-	-
Steve Morgan Foundation and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport	6,666	-	6,666	248,917	-	248,917
St Monica's Trust Community Impact	-	-	-	9,085	-	9,085
Somerset County Council	24,371	-	24,371	33,051	-	33,051
Masonic Charitable Foundation	11,199	-	11,199	-	-	-
Unwin Charitable Trust	60,000	-	60,000	30,000	-	30,000
The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington	-	-	-	6,432	-	6,432
Others	47,925	-	47,925	26,404	-	26,404
	381,170	-	381,170	543,631	-	543,631

5 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £
Cafe,ice-cream parlour and other income	1,800,694	1,471,576

6 Income from investments

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £
Interest receivable	7,410	2,091

7 Other income

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £
Net gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	680	-
Insurance claim	-	5,214
	680	5,214

8 Raising funds

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £
Trading costs		
Operating costs	800,135	742,315
Other staff costs	1,323	2,607
Staff costs	949,105	694,455
Trading costs	1,750,563	1,439,377

9 Charitable activities

	Shared reading 2024	Storybarn 2024	Total 2024	Shared reading 2023	Storybarn 2023	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	1,834,393	110,750	1,945,143	2,080,548	110,286	2,190,834
Depreciation and impairment	-	44,527	44,527	-	44,528	44,528
Other expenditure	375,504	22,791	398,295	363,446	25,072	388,518
	2,209,897	178,068	2,387,965	2,443,994	179,886	2,623,880
Share of support costs (see note 10)	759,416	66,036	825,452	776,881	58,475	835,356
Share of governance costs (see note 10)	17,251	902	18,153	12,589	947	13,536
	2,986,564	245,006	3,231,570	3,233,464	239,308	3,472,772
Analysis by fund						
Unrestricted funds	2,596,748	245,006	2,841,754	2,689,608	239,308	2,928,916
Restricted funds	389,816	-	389,816	543,856	-	543,856
	2,986,564	245,006	3,231,570	3,233,464	239,308	3,472,772

10 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2024	Support costs	Governance costs	2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	345,447	-	345,447	371,383	-	371,383
Depreciation	247,467	-	247,467	248,152	-	248,152
Other costs	232,538	-	232,538	215,821	-	215,821
Audit fees	-	10,050	10,050	-	9,563	9,563
Accountancy	-	7,638	7,638	-	3,187	3,187
Trustee expenses	-	465	465	-	786	786
	825,452	18,153	843,604	835,356	13,536	848,892
Analysed between						
Charitable activities	825,452	18,153	843,605	835,356	13,536	848,892

11 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2024 Number	2023 Number
Shared Reading	97	99
Support Services	10	10
Storybarn	13	13
Calderstones Mansion House CIC	61	53
Total	181	175

Employment costs	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	2,910,578	2,889,912
Social security costs	194,076	217,442
Other pension costs	135,041	149,318
	3,239,695	3,256,672

Retirement benefit schemes

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the Charity in an independently administered fund.

The charge to the statement of financial activities in respect of defined contribution schemes was £135,041 (2023: £149,318).

There were outstanding contributions in respect of defined contribution schemes at 31 March 2024 of £18,596 (2023: £NIL).

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000.

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Aggregate compensation	381,570	429,066

12 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

13 Trustees

None of the trustees received any remuneration during either the current or previous year, and trustees were reimbursed £465 for travelling expenses (2023: £786).

14 Calderstones Mansion House CIC

A summary of the results of the subsidiary is shown below:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Income	1,732,339	1,420,481
Expenditure	(1,755,148)	(1,443,877)
	(22,809)	(23,396)

Aggregate assets and liabilities

Current assets	268,178	480,147
Current liabilities	(314,382)	(503,542)
	(46,204)	(23,395)

15 Tangible fixed assets - Group and Company

	Leasehold improvements	Fixtures and fittings	Computers	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost				
At 1 April 2023	4,915,912	1,343,200	40,884	6,299,996
Additions	-	6,257	3,285	9,542
Disposals	-	(18,241)	(12,694)	(30,935)
At 31 March 2024	4,915,912	1,331,216	31,475	6,278,603
Depreciation and impairment				
At 1 April 2023	645,094	537,716	35,831	1,218,641
Depreciation charged in the year	134,143	153,822	4,030	291,995
Eliminated in respect of disposals	-	(14,406)	(12,694)	(27,100)
At 31 March 2024	779,237	677,132	27,167	1,483,536
Carrying amount				
At 31 March 2024	4,136,675	654,084	4,308	4,795,067
At 31 March 2023	4,270,817	805,484	5,054	5,081,355

16 Fixed asset investments - Group undertakings

The charity owns the whole of the issued share capital of the following subsidary undertaking which is registered in England and has the same registered office as the charity.

Subsidiary	Principal activity
Calderstones Mansion House CIC	Restaurants and cafes

The carrying value of the investment in the financial statements is £1 (2023:£1).

17 Stocks - Group

	2024	2023
	£	£
Goods for resale	29,085	28,227

18 Debtors - Group

	2024	2023
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Trade debtors	117,121	132,860
Other debtors	53,378	32,091
Prepayments and accrued income	122,046	162,168
	292,545	327,119

19 Debtors - Charity

	2024	2023
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Trade debtors	44,432	107,704
Amounts owed by subsidiary undertakings	73,206	260,106
Other debtors	34,106	32,091
Prepayments and accrued income	114,949	155,080
	266,693	554,981

20 Retirement benefit schemes

	2024	2023
Defined contribution schemes	£	£
Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes	135,041	149,318

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund.

21 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year - Group

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Other taxation and social security		100,321	50,435
Deferred income	23	735,801	561,809
Trade creditors		101,990	127,922
Other creditors		23,003	4,057
Accruals		37,907	29,784
		999,022	774,007

22 Creditors:amounts falling due within one year - Charity

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Other taxation and social security		50,305	-
Deferred income	24	599,730	433,334
Trade creditors		68,423	82,147
Other creditors		20,545	2,202
Accruals and deferred income		18,844	13,141
		757,847	530,824

23 Deferred income - Group

	2024 £	2023 £
Other deferred income	735,801	561,809

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Balance at 1 April 2023	561,809	1,111,043
Amounts received in year	2,276,187	1,674,109
Amounts credited to statement of financial activities	(2,102,195)	(2,073,777)
Balance at 31 March 2024	735,801	561,809

24 Deferred income - Charity

	2024	2023
	£	£
Other deferred income	599,730	433,334

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Balance at 1 April 2023	433,334	1,085,090
Amounts received in year	2,008,193	1,602,964
Amounts credited to statement of financial activities	(1,841,797)	(2,035,086)
Balance at 31 March 2024	599,730	653,846

25 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2023 - £1,600).

26 Company limited by guarantee

The charitable company is limited by guarantee and has no share capital. Every member of the charity undertakes to contribute to the assets of the charity in the event of being wound up while he or she is a member or within one year of ceasing to be a member for debts and liabilities of the charity contracted before he or she ceases to be a member, such amounts as may be required not exceeding £10.

27 Restricted funds - Group & Charity

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

		Movement in funds				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Shared Reading	-	543,856	(543,856)	-	-	389,816	(389,816)	-	-
Calderstones Mansion House	5,030,754	-	-	(205,732)	4,825,022	-	-	(205,660)	4,619,362
	5,030,764	543,856	(543,856)	(205,732)	4,825,022	389,816	(389,816)	(205,660)	4,619,362

Shared Reading
Shared Reading includes our core work of delivering shared reading groups. This is funded through grants and commissions (please refer to notes 3 and 4 for further information).

Calderstones Mansion House
The Calderstones Mansion House is the charities headquarters based at our site within Calderstones Park. Grants have been received from Heritage Lottery, Liverpool City Council, Tudor Trust and other funders to refurbish the building. The money for this project has been split between restricted funds and a designated unrestricted fund depending on the nature of the income received. Following the completion of the building works and satisfaction of the restrictions within the grants, the restricted fund will be transferred to the designated unrestricted fund where it will be reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year.

28 Unresticted funds - Group

The unrestricted funds of the charity also include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General unrestricted	842,716	3,697,517	(3,984,787)	184,334	739,528	3,965,080	(4,531,782)	182,180	355,006
Storybarn Building	173,663	-	(44,528)	-	129,135	-	(44,527)	-	84,608
Calderstones Mansion House	85,583	-	-	-	85,583	-	-	-	85,583
Grant funded fixtures	32,175	-	(16,167)	-	16,008	-	(16,008)	-	-
Mansion House support fund	179,010	-	(179,010)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Personnel investment fund	86,000	-	(86,000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
IT re-structure and infrastructure fund	57,801	-	(57,801)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund	42,014	-	-	21,398	63,412	-	-	23,480	86,892
	1,498,962	3,697,517	(4,368,293)	205,732	1,033,666	3,965,080	(4,592,317)	205,660	612,089

28 Unresticted funds - Group **(Continued)**

Storybarn Building
The Storybarn represents the capital cost of the building. This fund will be reduced by the associated depreciation charge each year.

Calderstones Mansion House
The Calderstones Mansion House is the charities headquarters based at our site within Calderstones Park. Grants have been received from Heritage Lottery, Liverpool City Council, Tudor Trust and other funders to refurbish the building. The money for this project has been split between restricted funds and a designated unrestricted fund depending on the nature of the income received. Following the completion of the building works and satisfaction of the restrictions within the grants, the restricted fund will be transferred to the designated unrestricted fund where it will be reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year.

Mansion House support fund
This represents a re-investment of a charitable donation from the Charity's subsidiary, Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company, towards the site and operations that underpin our charitable work.

Personnel investment fund
The Trustees have designated a Personnel Investment Fund to facilitate growth by aligning workforce planning to strategic plans. This fund will enable the organisation to invest in the future through the implementation of a new reward and recognition programme for staff and enablement of succession planning.

IT re-structure and infrastructure fund
The Board of Trustees recognise technology's strategic importance as a critical component of the Charity's activities and have designated an IT re-structure and infrastructure fund to invest in The Charity's technology capabilities.

Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund
The sinking fund is set up to provide a provision for future major repairs to Calderstones Mansion House. The agreed amount to be transferred each year from the general reserves is in the region of £21,000.

29 Unresticted funds - Charity

The unrestricted funds of the charity also include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds					Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Gains and losses	Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Gains and losses	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General unrestricted	842,719	2,277,036	(2,540,240)	183,409		762,924	2,230,451	(2,774,344)	182,180		401,211
Storybarn Building	173,663	-	(44,528)	-	-	129,135	-	(44,527)	-	-	84,608
Calderstones Mansion House	85,583	-	-	-		85,583	-	-	-	-	85,583
Grant funded fixtures	32,175	-	(16,167)	-	-	16,008	-	(16,008)	-	-	-
Mansion House support fund	179,010	-	(179,010)		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Personnel investment fund	86,000	-	(86,000)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
IT re-structure and infrastructure fund	57,801	-	(57,801)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund	42,014	-	-	21,398	-	63,412	-	-	23,480	-	86,892
	1,498,965	2,277,036	(2,923,746)	204,807		1,057,062	2,230,451	(2,834,879)	205,660	-	658,294

29 Unresticted funds - Charity **(Continued)**

Storybarn Building
The Storybarn represents the capital cost of the building. This fund will be reduced by the associated depreciation charge each year.

Calderstones Mansion House
The Calderstones Mansion House is the charities headquarters based at our site within Calderstones Park. Grants have been received from Heritage Lottery, Liverpool City Council, Tudor Trust and other funders to refurbish the building. The money for this project has been split between restricted funds and a designated unrestricted fund depending on the nature of the income received. Following the completion of the building works and satisfaction of the restrictions within the grants, the restricted fund will be transferred to the designated unrestricted fund where it will be reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year.

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30 Analysis of net assets between funds - Group

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	97,073	4,697,994	4,795,067	256,333	4,825,022	5,081,355
Current assets/(liabilities)	436,384	-	436,384	777,585	-	777,585
	533,457	4,697,994	5,231,451	1,033,918	4,825,022	5,858,940

31 Analysis of net assets between funds - Charity

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	97,073	4,697,994	4,795,067	256,334	4,825,021	5,081,355
Investments	1	-	1	1	-	1
Current assets/(liabilities)	482,588	-	482,588	800,727	-	800,727
	579,662	4,697,994	5,277,656	1,057,062	4,825,021	5,882,083

32 Operating lease commitments

At the reporting end date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Within one year	27,642	52,838
Between two and five years	110,568	154,568
In over five years	3,178,830	2,957,694
	3,317,040	3,165,100

33 Analysis of changes in net funds

The charity had no material debt during the year.

34 Cash generated from operations

	2024	2023
	£	£
Deficit for the year	(627,237)	(670,776)
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(7,410)	(2,091)
Gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	(680)	-
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	291,995	292,679
Movements in working capital:		
(Increase) in stocks	(858)	(6,179)
Decrease in debtors	34,574	139,054
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	50,771	(62,682)
Increase/(decrease) in deferred income	173,992	(149,567)
Cash absorbed by operations	(84,853)	(459,562)

THE READER ORGANISATION

England & Wales - Charity number 1126806

Accounts

Charity registration number 1126806 (England and Wales)

Charity registration number SC043054 (Scotland)

Company registration number 06607389 (England and Wales)

THE READER ORGANISATION

ANNUAL REPORT AND CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023



McLintocks

Xeinadin Group

THE READER ORGANISATION

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair) Mr H Biddell Dr R M Hussey CB,OBE,DL Mr P L Davies Mr P K Sood Mrs S Fletcher Dr H Willows Mr O Alake Mr NI Atkinson
Secretary	Ms J Martin
Managing Director **Director of Literature** **Director of Finance, Governance & Commercial Planning**	Ms J Guerrier Ms K Clarke Ms V Hopton
Charity number (England and Wales)	1126806
Charity number (Scotland)	SC043054
Company number	06607389
Registered office	The Mansion House Calderstones Park Liverpool Merseyside L18 3JB
Auditor	Xeinadin Audit Limited 2 Hilliards Court Chester Business Park Chester Cheshire CH4 9QP
Bankers	Santander UK Plc Bridle Road Bootle Merseyside L30 4GB

THE READER ORGANISATION

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THE READER ORGANISATION

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Statement from the Chair, Managing Director and Director of Literature

We grow accustomed to the Dark

We grow accustomed to the Dark -
When Light is put away -
As when the Neighbor holds the Lamp
To witness her Good bye -

A Moment - We uncertain step
For newness of the night -
Then fit our Vision to the Dark -
And meet the Road - erect -

And so of larger - Darknesses -
Those Evenings of the Brain -
When not a Moon disclose a sign -
Or Star - come out - within -

The Bravest - grope a little -
And sometimes hit a Tree
Directly in the Forehead -
But as they learn to see -

Either the Darkness alters -
Or something in the sight
Adjusts itself to Midnight -
And Life steps almost straight.

Emily Dickinson

Emerging Into light

Over the last year, as we emerged from a global pandemic and a turbulent time of change, we chose the theme of Light and Darkness for our annual Bookshelf, our selection of novels, non-fiction, poetry and stories to read together in Shared Reading groups. These books were shared across our movement and offered ways of thinking about the complications of emerging into light and life again as well as the nourishment or realisations felt during darkness and night.

In a new Shared Reading group for families who are living in a state of transition and uncertainty as they await the outcome of asylum applications, we read the poem above from the Bookshelf. One group member shared how much the group meant to her. 'I have been unable to speak for 8 months. Whenever I try I feel ashamed because my English isn't good.' Yet in the group she found she was able, not only to speak, but to use her voice for the kind of brave exploration described in the poem.

Shared Reading provides a unique space where it is ok to 'sometimes hit a tree' and creates moments where 'the Darkness alters...And Life steps almost straight'. It's no exaggeration to say that these moments continue to provide a lifeline for people.

A new chapter

In December 2022, The Reader's Founder and Director, Dr Jane Davis, retired after 25 years. It was Jane's personal experience of literature as both a 'life-saver and life-maker' that led to the creation of The Reader and is our organisational 'origin story'.

The Shared Reading practice that Jane pioneered has now been adopted by hundreds of volunteers and partners across the UK – and around the world – to transform people's lives. This movement is quite a legacy to leave. Now, thousands of people all have their own origin stories of Shared Reading and are using literature as a tool to survive and live well – as Jane envisaged.

As part of The Reader's succession plan, Katie Clark was appointed as Director of Literature in Spring 2022. Following Jane's resignation in December, the Board of Trustees appointed Jemma Guerrier as Managing Director, creating a new joint leadership team to take the organisation forward into the next chapter. Such joint leadership models are common across the arts and culture sector and for The Reader, the change ensures we have a combination of literary experience and broader third sector experience leading the organisation's senior team.

On behalf of the Trustees and everyone at The Reader, including all those people who have had the joy of experiencing Shared Reading with her first hand, we thank Jane for her many years of dedicated leadership. Her vision for a Shared Reading revolution continues to drive us on. Her vision for a place where health and wellbeing is improved through reading, nature, heritage and creativity is now a reality at Calderstones in Liverpool. And we will hold the values she embedded close as we seek to create and innovate to further our mission in an increasingly volatile world. We are delighted that Jane continues to be involved by volunteering as Head Gardener on site at Calderstones and we are working with her to shape her involvement with the organisation.

A new strategic plan

This year was the first year working towards our three strategic goals for the future. After the turbulent times of the pandemic and subsequent recovery, it felt important for us to reflect on what we've learned in that time and challenge ourselves about how we can make best use of limited resources in the future, especially given the volatile funding environment. This has resulted in some tough decisions about stopping some projects whilst embedding some of our Covid-response approaches into our work for the future – from online training to our podcast. A new three-year business plan has now evolved which will focus our work for next strategic period.

We continued to prioritise race in our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion work through our organisation-wide Shared Reading project ("Just Us"), which focused on reading literature by black writers to help facilitate meaningful internal conversations around race and racism.

A growing Reading Revolution

Over 700 volunteers continue to power the reading revolution; across the year, 121 new volunteers trained to read with adults, 36 to read with children and young people, and we welcomed 60 new volunteers at Calderstones. We are incredibly grateful to all our volunteers for their dedication and commitment.

Thanks also to the partners who host and refer people to our groups and in some cases have their own staff trained to deliver Shared Reading. Many of our partners are facing tough times themselves yet recognise the impact that Shared Reading can have for the people they support and commit precious resources to make groups to happen.

Thanks to the passion of this shared reading network, we engaged 21,947 people in Shared Reading activities this year with an increase of 5,000 engaging in our adult SR groups.

This was also the first full year of operations at Calderstones where the evolving programme of weekly activities and indoor and outdoor events, alongside our social enterprises, provided over 21,914 people with many meaningful moments of connection. Work on a new National Lottery Heritage Funded project 'Meaning Making at Calderstones' gathered momentum, engaging visitors with new heritage activities and researching Calderstones' history and links to the transatlantic slave trade.

Vital funding

We also want to express our thanks to our funders of all sizes, for their generous support this year. This was a pivotal year in paving the way for the expansion of our one-to-one reading work with children in care.

Following the end of a Children In Need grant, we were delighted to receive direct commissions from both the Liverpool and Sefton Virtual Schools to continue this work. We were also incredibly grateful to The Rayne Foundation for their multi-year investment that will enable Reading Heroes to scale and our impact to grow. Alongside these projects, The Storybarn – our imaginative play space for children and families at Calderstones – exceeded its visitor target this year providing meaningful engagement for 14,165 visitors and 68 schools in the Liverpool City Region.

This year marked the final year of our two multi-year grants supported by the Steve Morgan Foundation. The First Page project was an expansive Merseyside-wide project which enabled us to bring the joy of reading for pleasure to early years children, services, parents and carers most in need across Merseyside. Thanks to the funding from Steve Morgan Foundation and DCMS Community Match challenge, we brought the benefits of Shared Reading across the communities we support - from children in schools, young people facing barriers to employment, to adults accessing Shared Reading in prisons, care homes and in the wider Cheshire and Merseyside community.

We owe huge thanks to players of People's Postcode Lottery for their generous, sustained investment. The unrestricted income they provide enabled us to not merely continue to rebuild the vital support for our volunteers and communities after the pandemic but also helped us to emerge stronger and more resilient for the future.

Finally, a huge thanks must go to our staff, in all their varied roles, whose collective commitment to getting literature, that 'tough language', out to more people who are living this tough life, has resulted in many moments of vital connection for thousands of people over the last year.



Mrs A S Marsland MBE (chair)

Dated: 14 September 2023

THE READER ORGANISATION

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 2 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document (Memorandum and Articles of Association), the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities

Objects of the charity

The charity's objects are to promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of citizens and inhabitants of the United Kingdom and other countries, in particular the advancement of education, the furtherance of health, the relief of poverty, distress and sickness, the promotion of social inclusion and furtherance of community especially through reading and literature based activities.

Our Vision

We want a world where everyone can experience the power of literature to help us survive and live well.

Our Mission

The Reader is a charity that uses the power of literature and reading aloud to transform lives across the UK. Our volunteers and staff bring people together to read great stories and poems – creating powerful moments of connection. We call this Shared Reading.

In a world that feels increasingly divided, and with increased pressures on our mental health, Shared Reading offers us time and space to share what matters to us.

We read with children, families, adults in libraries and community spaces, people in care homes, people with physical and mental health conditions, those coping with or recovering from addiction and people in the criminal justice system. Our work improves wellbeing, reduces loneliness and helps us find new meaning in our lives.

FY2022/23 Strategic Goals

In consultation with staff, volunteers and trustees, in FY2022/23 we designed three new strategic goals to guide our future work:

1. Opening the treasure house of great literature for everyone.
2. Develop Shared Reading in places where it's most needed.
3. Understand and talk about the change literature and Shared Reading can make in the world.

These goals are underpinned by four Investment Principles, as outlined in Arts Council England's 2020-2030 Strategy (Let's Create), which provide us with a useful structure to plan and monitor our areas of work. These four principles are:

1. Dynamism
2. Inclusivity and Relevance
3. Environmental Responsibility
4. Ambition and Quality

We had a one-year transitional business plan underpinning our operations in FY2022/23, aligning with the Arts Council England extension of the current National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) period for another year.

This year, it has felt important to consolidate our learning in order to inform and sharpen our focus for the future and ensure we're using our resources in the most effective ways. This has involved a number of pieces of work including:

- Assessing what we learnt during the pandemic and identifying which activities should remain as business as usual and which should evolve or stop.
- Considering the development of our publications strategy.
- Some focused strategic development work on two key areas to meet the goal of 'develop Shared Reading in places where it's most needed; a plan to grow Shared Reading in acute mental health settings and a plan to scale Reading Heroes with children in care. Securing initial funding towards these two areas this year provides us with a strong foundation from which we can build and develop a sustainable longer-term strategy
- This financial year was also the first full year of activity across our Calderstones site, providing us with a huge amount of data, learning and experiences from which to develop our programming and audience strategies.

During this year, we also finalised a new three-year business plan which has these three strategic goals and four principles at its heart.

Achievements and performance

2022-23 OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

STRATEGIC GOAL ONE – Opening the Treasure House of great literature for everyone

As we worked towards our goal of opening the treasure house of literature for everyone, 2022-2023 saw an increased output of literary content. While in order to reduce costs and concentrate resources, production of The Reader Magazine, Life Lines activity packs and the online weekly 'Featured Poem' videos was ceased.

The Reader Bookshelf

The Literary Content team have utilised The Reader Bookshelf – our annual programme of carefully curated literature that supports all our reading-based work – to ensure that staff and volunteers have access to the list of adult texts via digital and physical channels.

They have also created content and products to introduce the Bookshelf to a wider public audience; the four 'mini-anthologies' that were initially produced as volunteer resources were printed and sold as part of Bookshelf-themed gift boxes in The Reader Shop at Calderstones and online.

Collaboration with other teams resulted in the production of several anthologies which supported their work, as well as an anthology of literature about grief and loss which will be an invaluable resource in many areas of ongoing work.

"*These anthologies are a gift and a wonderful idea that encourages Reader Leaders to delve into new things with their group.*"

Volunteer Reader Leader

The Reader Podcast

The Reader Podcast continued production throughout the year; 13 episodes are available and as of February 2023, the series had reached 5,000 downloads. The podcast will continue to develop in the next financial year, taking on the mantle of the magazine by bringing the treasure house of great literature and the Shared Reading experience to a wider audience.

The team also sought to gather data on the reach and impact of the different publications produced throughout the year. The data remains incomplete and hard to read, so the objective to seek meaningful feedback on literature resources remains an objective for FY2023/24.

Public events and activities at Calderstones

The Reader's head office in Calderstones Park, South Liverpool is home to a vibrant programme of events and activities that invites visitors of all ages to share in the magic of literature and reading aloud.

Across FY2022/23, all programmed activity was designed to meet three priority outcomes:

1. Readers benefit from literature – participants get more from reading, are inspired to read, read a wider range,understand themselves better, enjoy reading, and are able to better express their thoughts and feelings.
2. Reduce social isolation – participants have an improved sense of belonging or community.
3. Improve wellbeing - participants report feeling better, improved sense of purpose, that the local area is a better place to live, work or visit or improved confidence.

As a result, the 2022/2023 programme was more varied in scope than in previous years. Events such as Sounds in the Park (musical performance series), theatre performances from the Handlebards and the Heritage Open Days' Tea Dance provided a 'way in' approach to engagement with individuals and communities who are perhaps reluctant, or face barriers, when attending a Shared Reading group or literary event.

Alongside this, the programme also offered opportunities for 'more' for our existing, engaged community of Readers through events such as the Gravity Festival, 'Sunday School' workshops, the 'Ways To...' extended Shared Reading sessions. as well as our ongoing programme of weekly Shared Reading groups.

As the International Home of Shared Reading, we continued the development of our public activity and weekly, community-driven, wellbeing and Shared Reading groups. Our Knit and Natter groups thrived this year and it was wonderful to see them truly engaged across all activity at the Mansion House while the Upcycling group gained new skills and increased visibility on site with their products retailing in the shop. The success of new Shared Reading groups such as Pride on the Page exemplify the aim to make programmed activity more accessible and welcoming to a more diverse range of communities.

Across the year there were successes (Sounds in the Park, theatre performances and outreach and wellbeing activities) along with challenges; most notably around the lack of diversity in our audiences, our reach as a cultural organisation in the Liverpool City Region and activity perceived as niche by large segments of potential audiences creating barriers to engagement. Moving in to FY2023/24 we will be taking this learning and defining a vision for whole-site activity at Calderstones that is: **high quality, accessible, relevant** and **recognisable.**

FY2022/23 also saw the launch of the National Lottery Heritage Funded project '*Meaning Making at Calderstones.*' The project seeks to find new and interesting ways for more a more diverse audience to experience heritage at Calderstones and to bring heritage into the organisation's overarching vision for engagement, providing a vital means of wellbeing support, reducing social isolation and embedding the concept of literature as a form of heritage across the organisation.

Volunteers

For me this organization has added a different dimension to my understandings, my appreciation, my sorrows. I can't praise it enough. It has given me a new stride in my step. The possibility of rediscovering my emotions and dreams that have shaped my life – a way to look forward as well as reframing the past, and looking forward to new ways of thinking about the future through the literature.
Reader Volunteer

Throughout the year over **700 volunteers helped us achieve our aims** by reading with adults or children, or supporting activities at the Mansion House. We took care to make sure they all felt valued and appreciated throughout the year. It was fantastic to be able to provide an annual programme of events again, post-Covid, to say thank you, to share good practice and to provide opportunities to meet other volunteers. At the Mansion House new volunteer roles were created to support the work delivered on the National Lottery Heritage Fund grant to research into the origins of the Mansion House.

STRATEGIC GOAL TWO – Develop Shared Reading in places where it's most needed

Our Work with Children and Young People

We are pleased with the progress made working with Children and Young People. We are beginning to realise our ambition to grow our work reading with Looked after Children through our Reading Heroes project. This year saw us move from grant funded work to commissioned work, securing and successfully delivering contracts from both Liverpool and Sefton Virtual Schools. In total, 443 weekly activities were delivered for 42 Looked After Children during the course of the year.

Both initiatives have recommissioned The Reader for FY2023/24. Liverpool Virtual School have been so impressed with the impact of Reading Heroes on their 5-15 year olds that they commissioned us to design an Early Years model for FY2023/24. This expansion allows us to close the gap between Looked After Children and their peers. The 'Tiny Heroes' will launch in the new financial year.

A new grant from the Rayne Foundation obtained this year will support us to us to further plan for the scaling and growth of this strand of work over the next three years.

"Reading Heroes has helped us massively. I can't give enough praise to the staff and The Reader. We are foster carers. One of our children, moved to us from Wales. A language of which, unfortunately, we do not speak a word. Reading Heroes enabled us to keep a part of that child's heritage. It really is a fantastic service, the staff are on hand for any questions, and will often check in to make sure that everything is okay, without being overbearing.

The volunteer - ours has to be one of the most beautiful human beings on the planet. S is so thoughtful and always has a funny tale to tell, to put the child and parent at ease. She encourages and reassures our child, helping them to see their self-worth allowing the child's confidence to grow. S has become, what feels like, part of our family. I honestly can't praise them all enough."
Foster Carer

We have continued to create new relationships and build on existing links with partners in the Liverpool City Region us to reach families and children we wouldn't otherwise be able to engage easily with. Our collaborative publishing relationships have also continued to flourish. One great example is the Tiny Reindeer Outdoor Story Trail delivered in December in partnership with Andersen Press. As well as supplying the required laminate boards and granting illustration permissions, they arranged for the author Chris Naylor-Ballesteros to give an author talk. In total, The Tiny Reindeer Story Trail had 1729 visitors, making it our most visited trail to date.

The Storybarn – our imaginative play space for children and families at Calderstones – exceeded its visitor target this year providing meaningful engagement for 14,165 visitors and 68 schools from across the Liverpool City Region. The team launched 'Open House' this year, aimed at children under the age of 9 with Autism Spectrum Disorder or sensory conditions. Families are able to enjoy the space and interact with staff at their own pace. A partnership with Autism Awareness supported us to establish this new addition to the programme.

Our Work with Adults

"I do believe Shared Reading is a source of great solace and a healer. I've done mindfulness before, but this is something else, it's on another level. It involves other people, it's aloud and you allow yourself to let it go and get in there and breathe. I've shared with me, I feel as though I've connected to myself, let alone the rest of the group. It's like a stopping place on a lovely long walk."

Shared Reading Group Member

Despite external difficulties, 2022-23 was another year of change, re-growth and re-engagement post-Covid. We finished the year in a positive position: **300 community-based groups** (excludes work in Criminal Justice services), supported by nearly **500 volunteers**. We also retained a strong recommission rate in a challenging external landscape.

Our focus has been to re-establish in person community activity; our pandemic-era 'The Reader at Home' offer came to an end in February 2023, freeing up resource to help us get back into communities to provide some all-important connection along with some online provision for remote readers.

Collaboration has been key to the progress made; The Reader has worked with hundreds of partners to make Shared Reading part of the bloodstream of everyday wellbeing, finding our place within the new place-based NHS personalised care model in key priority areas.

These changes have supported strategic discipline in our overarching aim to deliver Shared Reading as part of cohesive, wraparound mental health strategies, along with specific focus on volunteer recruitment and care. Resources have been carefully directed, including specific EDI targets which ensure our work continues to reach communities.

Intersecting with this activity, support from Unwin Charitable Trust has enabled a national consultation with library services, strengthening The Reader's delivery models and offer within this essential sector. After a period of learning and collation, funding will be allocated to five services working with priority audiences in 2023-24.

Our Work in Criminal Justice

"It takes you out of your comfort zone. I wouldn't usually do things like this but obviously now I would – I've been 13 times – something keeps bringing me back. I'm going to keep coming until I get shipped out... I'm more open now to listening, to getting to know other people – less stereotypical, less judgmental. I used to judge everything before."

Shared Reading Group Member, Male Prison

As in our wider adult work, Shared Reading in justice services enjoyed the first year of post-Covid full re-establishment of activity in 2022-23.

Not only did we return to all but one of our 35 settings, we also gained four new approved premises from our work with the jointly-funded NHS England and HMPPS Offender Personality Disorder pathway programme, bringing welcome diversion to yet more readers serving sentences. Activity also continued in Northern Ireland through NI Health & Social Care, which brings Shared Reading to all prisons in the country.

As well as groups, we amplify the outcomes of our work through associated activities, bringing poetry to group walks, facilitating library visits and even taking part in a talent competition in probation services. To further support quality practice, we have developed a Culture Carriers network, facilitating space for probation employees to learn from one another and embed Shared Reading across this national programme.

"I struggle in social situations and want to retreat all the time, so it helps me to work on that side of my personality... I like hearing different views and if someone finds the story sad or funny and I don't, it's interesting how people see things totally different from me. It's like all looking at the same painting and seeing different colours... I can then see what [other people] mean; it alters the way you think."

Shared Reading Group Member, Female Approved Premises
Off the Page Impact

The Reader's work in justice services offers an additional environment of support for residents, many of whom have faced enormous deprivation and endured traumatic early lives, as well as developing clinical understanding through non-clinical creative activities. In 2022, research commissioned by our funders and carried out by the Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge was published, demonstrating the impact of Shared Reading in these sensitive services. Findings included the following:

"those who attended Shared Reading groups scored statistically significantly higher compared to other members on the wing in relation to wellbeing, hope, agency and self-efficacy, and interpersonal trust. The more sessions participants attended, the higher their scores on hope, motivation to change, interpersonal trust, and relationships with staff... The distinctive qualities of Shared Reading – being read to, reading aloud, and sharing literature – made a unique contribution to participants' experience. It also made an important contribution to PIPE staff competence, especially through the Reader Leader training and experience of leading groups (one Prison Officer commented that it had been the 'best training for working on the PIPE' that he had."

STRATEGIC GOAL THREE – Understand and talk about the change that literature and Shared Reading can make in the world

To make the profound change we want to make in the world, and to reach many more people our new strategy includes a specific goal to find ways to make more explicit the benefits of our work, and to build support for Shared Reading amongst people who can play a part in delivering our mission. We are doing this through strengthening our approach to evaluation, finding more ways to bring the voices of people who benefit from Shared Reading into our communications, collaborating with other organisations and alliances, and inspiring our movement of Reader Leaders and partners to help spread the Reading Revolution. During 2022/23 we delivered the following key activities to support this goal:

- In Loneliness Awareness Week we shared research from polling carried out by Opinium highlighting the extent of loneliness in the UK and highlighted how Shared Reading can help address this issue. In August, we released further research around reading and wellbeing. This story appeared in 6 national papers, and our Director of Literature and Helen Cook, a Reader Leader and patient who runs a Shared Reading group at Liverpool Broadgreen Hospital's chronic pain unit spoke on BBC Radio Merseyside about our work and what it can do to support mental health.
- The recognition that Shared Reading can be adapt well in various settings and sectors has led to support in efforts to grow our community-based offer for people everywhere. We have been included as a founding partner on Aesop's prescribe-arts platform prescribe-arts platform which showcases high quality, well evidenced arts in health programmes for social prescribing link workers, public health professionals and the general public
- We have also: chaired a Public Policy Exchange event discussing the future of libraries, presented out latest research carried out in partnership with University of Cambridge at a national CLINKS forum, presented at Pathway's Homeless Health conference and continued to foster relationships with a rich range of funders, delivery partners and friends-in-ethos.
- We were also included in 'COVID-19 CARE: Culture and the Arts ... Protecting Mental Health in the Liverpool City Region' a report by the University of Liverpool and supported by UKRI's Arts and Humanities Research Council.
- As part of our second Gravity Festival, we ran a 'Reading with Care' webinar, exploring the benefits of literature for good mental health with psychoanalyst and author Josh Cohen, Director of Liverpool Public Health, Matt Ashton, and NHS colleagues engaged with Shared Reading. This vibrant discussion showcased the impact of Shared Reading, sharing learning and ideas for integrating Shared Reading into services.

THE PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING OUR GOALS: OUR PROGRESS IN 2022-23

1. DYNAMISM

For The Reader, dynamism covers a range of areas from income generation to technology, our development in people, to strategic development. Progress this year has included:

- A structured approach to strategy development – we produced a new three-year business plan for the FY2023/26 period. A new meeting format for the Board of Trustees meetings was implemented to provide space and structure for deep-dive sessions on strategic areas as part of the cycle of business. Areas covered over the year were EDI, Talent Management, Income Strategy and Volunteering.
- We created and launched a Talent Management Strategy to underpin the new business plan so we can feel confident that we are attracting new talent where needed and developing and retaining our existing talent. We also took the first steps towards our ambition to develop a culture of coaching within the organisation by providing robust external training for 13 of our senior managers. As the strategy developed, we commissioned two pieces of external consultancy work on diversifying our recruitment networks and improving our recruitment communications.
- We continued to build our social enterprises against a backdrop of challenging economic circumstances. We balanced the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on our business with prioritising accessibility and affordability for our community. Calderstones Mansion House CIC, which includes the newly opened Reader Bar and Restaurant, generated £1.4m income in FY2022/23. We improved the quality of the catering offer to reinforce Calderstones position as a premier wedding venue, while also developing the bookshop business.
- We continued to improve our ability to monitor, understand and evaluate our work with a focus on: encouraging more data returns on an ongoing basis by embedding the new online community hub and supporting Reader Leaders to submit information each week, taking time to learn from the data we collect by sharing with the organisation the data from our Annual Feedback Week process, and strengthening culture around use of data by supporting teams to review and use performance data for their areas. We also continue to collaborate with academic institutions on more focused research connected to Shared Reading. We also started a review of our Theory of Change for Adult Shared Reading in communities, which will be completed in 2023/24 and will support a refresh of our evaluation approach post-COVID.
- Digital and IT investment – from volunteer engagement to audience development, through to ways of working and better data, we know there is huge potential for technology to improve our impact and efficiency. In 2022-23, we moved closer to this goal by adopting a more strategic approach to digital and engaging specialist expertise to help us work through our priorities. Our IT capabilities were also enhanced with the roll-out of an IT strategy which aims to improve the delivery of IT services and cybersecurity risk mitigation.

2. INCLUSIVITY AND RELEVANCE

"What if what I want from you is new, newly made a new
sentence in response to all my questions"
- Just Us, Claudia Rankine

Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy covers all aspects of our work, including considering the literature we read, our people, volunteers and participants in Shared Reading and our wider programme, with a priority focus on racial diversity in line with the commitment made by our Founder in 2020.
In 2022/23, we made progress towards our EDI goals by:

- Exploring the history of our home, the Mansion House at Calderstones Park, through our "Diverse Connections" project funded by National Heritage Lottery Fund, researching the history and connections of the past owners to the trans-Atlantic slave trade. This research was carried out by volunteer community curators, with the support of a historian and specialist in black British History. Whilst this research didn't find any direct connections to the slave trade, it illustrates the complex and nuanced family history as well as wider context of the times. We are working with an artist to produce an exhibit to illustrate the research on site, which will be launched in 2023/24.

- We continued to focus on diversity in the literature we read and produced anthologies and support sessions to promote use of diverse texts by Reader Leaders. The Light and Darkness Bookshelf included Red Dust Road by Jackie Kay, Half of a Yellow Sun by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, and The Third Life of Grange Copeland by Alice Walker.
- We were delighted that Hannah Chukwu, editor of Penguin's Black Britain:Writing Back, curated a programme strand at Gravity Festival, hosting readings and conversations with writers Jacqueline Roy, Judith Bryan, Kadija Sesay and Hannah Azieb-Pool. Writers Tomiwa Owolade and Ashleigh Nugent also spoke at Gravity, about their recently published books This is Not America and Locks. Reading and talking with these writers opened up new and wide-ranging conversations about mental health, race, class, the criminal justice system, identity, displacement and more, and inspired Gravity audiences to read more literature by writers of colour.
- We continued our organisation-wide Shared Reading project ("Just Us"), focused on reading literature by black writers to help facilitate meaningful internal conversations and change around race and racism. We shared this work at the Liverpool Against Racism conference in April 2022, and ran several "Shared Reading against Racism" sessions during the week-long festival. As one participant reflected afterwards "literature and reading can open doors and change perspectives".
- We also ran Shared Reading as part of Stopwatch's Rights and Wellbeing festival – supporting communities who have been impacted by disproportionate policing. Feedback on our work in this area supports our belief that Shared Reading can play a role in helping to foster understanding across difference, make sense of difficult experiences including racism, and we will continue to develop this in future.
- Internally, our staff equalities networks ran for a pilot period of 6 months and continue to offer a valued space for colleagues. Following recommendations from the neurodiversity staff network, neurodiversity training was provided for managers by our partner The Brain Charity.
- We continue to focus on increasing the diversity of our staff and volunteers, particularly in relation to people from black, Asian and ethnic minority backgrounds. Last year we saw an increase in the proportion of job applicants and volunteers recruited from ethnic minority backgrounds. Based on our annual staff and volunteer survey in March 2023, 9% of staff (increase from 8% last year) and 19% of new volunteers who joined us in 2022/23 were from a Black, Asian or ethnic minority background.
- Ultimately, our goal is that communities that may have been marginalised and are more likely to experience health inequalities are able to benefit from the power of Shared Reading. Groups set up in partnership with Borderlands in Bristol and Our Liverpool, working with asylum seekers and refugees, the Croydon BME Forum in London, Keyring in Doncaster (supporting people with learning disabilities) and Bradbury Fields in Liverpool (supporting blind and partially sighted people) all demonstrate that Shared Reading really is for everyone.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

All organisations must now engage with the challenges our environment faces and so The Reader's Board has decided to prioritise understanding and improving our environmental impacts. In 2022-23, we implemented a three-strand Environmental Strategy, designed to:

1. Decarbonise The Reader.
2. Develop a culture of grassroots action and responsibility for the environment, embedding consciously sustainable practices at all levels of the organisation.
3. Use The Reader's literary knowledge and skill to explore how we can create conversation about environmental questions, and integrate environmental content into our Shared Reading practice.

We are working with an external consultant who is supporting us to understand our impacts across The Reader and from this, we will develop a 5-year decarbonisation plan that will aim to reduce our net contribution to atmospheric carbon dioxide as close to zero as possible.

During 2022/23, we have established a grassroots working group at our home at Calderstones in Liverpool, which has developed a range of successful initiatives, including the removal of all plastic packaging from pre-packed products at our café. In 2023/24, this group will be expanded to include volunteers and board members, and reflect a wider cross-section of our Reader community across the UK.

The Reader Bookshelf has proved a useful tool in integrating environmentally-focused literature into Shared Reading practice and we will continue to build on this next year.

4. QUALITY AND AMBITION

'I really loved the course – and a lot has been happening with the quality of providing shared reading ever since. Thank you so much!'
International Train the Trainer Feedback, 2023

Our work to strengthen Quality Practice and Literature depth over the last year has included:

- The launch of a new Teaching Associate Pathway (TAP) to provide a formal personal development plan for staff to improve and strengthen their literary skills and breadth of reading. Over the year, 14 staff members accessed the pathway. 5 staff members have completed TAP and are now able to put their training into use by delivering Read to Lead and ongoing support activities as well as contributing to The Reader Library and other publications.
- Master class sessions focused on pre-twentieth century literature. These run as one-off sessions throughout the year and are open to all Reader Leaders and staff members. During 2022-2023, 12 Master classes were delivered and there were 144 attendances from across both Reader Staff and Volunteer Reader Leaders.
- The launch of an online Five Essentials Course has provided another way for all Reader Leaders to develop their Shared Reading skills flexibly in their own time. The course attracted 66 sign-ups, including both Reader Staff and Volunteer Reader Leaders.
- Our centralised support programme provided 140 ongoing learning workshops for Reader Leaders focused on practical skills and developing Shared Reading Practice. Workshops are delivered online at different times of day to attract a wide range of Reader Leaders. There were a total of 1020 attendances at support sessions with an average attendance of 10 Reader Leaders per session.
- Further development of our Online Community Hub, which complements our support programme. We have been using digital dashboards to understand what texts are being used by Reader Leaders. This information is collated into a 'What Are We Reading?' feature to showcase literature being used in groups across the country and celebrate our volunteers' voices.
- The delivery of training to International Partners. During the year we delivered 2 new Train the Trainer packages for partners in Switzerland and Germany. 4 participants successfully completed the programme and are now delivering Read to Lead courses in their own countries. We also delivered 2 international Refresher Courses and accommodated 8 international Read to Lead places on our online courses.
- We have trained 155 volunteers in our flagship Read To Lead course, through a combination of online and in-person courses. Our Shared Reading Practice Team created minimum quality standards for Read to Lead to empower course leads to address any quality issues and facilitate clear quality assurance at sign off. The standards are based on the minimum standards for Shared Reading community groups, which were first created in 2016 as a response to our first wave of the volunteer movement and our need to think about quality at scale.

Plans for future periods

Looking ahead to 2023-24 and beyond, our priorities will be structured around our three strategic aims and aligned with our four underpinning Investment Principles.

These priority areas have been developed and agreed by Directors Group, working in collaboration with Heads of Department across the organisation.

Our Aims

Strategic goal one: Opening the Treasure House of Literature for Everyone

1. Further develop our Calderstones strategy that ensure the site provides high-quality community activity whilst also offering a source of unrestricted income for the wider organisation.
2. Develop literary content that will help to introduce the experience of Shared Reading to new audiences and support volunteers to deepen their Shared Reading practice.
3. Improve the volunteer journey so that more Reader Leaders engage with our ongoing support programme, leading to higher quality Shared Reading delivery and increased impact data.

Strategic goal two: Develop Shared Reading where it's needed most

1. Build reach, presence and understanding across all strands of our work with children, young people and families.
2. Scale work in acute mental health and prison-based settings.
3. Grow Shared Reading communities and improve The Reader's connection with them, prioritising reach to those who need it most.

Strategic goal three: Understand and talk about the change literature and Shared Reading can make in the world

1. Develop a refreshed theory of change for community Adult Shared Reading and establish how we will apply this to our work.
2. Start building direct connections with Adult Shared Reading group members so that we can engage them and they can feel like part of The Reader community.
3. Deliver communications campaigns that will help increase awareness of Shared Reading while increasing and diversifying participation and reach.

Supporting Investment Principles

Dynamism

1. Implement one cross-organisational plan to increase unrestricted revenue across departments.
2. Increase the volume and depth of data relating to Shared Reading activities.
3. Ongoing roll-out of the talent management strategy.

Inclusivity and relevance

1. Continue to prioritise race in our EDI work as the area most underrepresented in our movement.
2. Develop Shared Reading Against Racism activities internally and externally.
3. Continue to diversify the literature we share through all our activities.

Environmental Responsibility

1. Action the top 3 carbon reduction priorities as highlighted in our work with an independent environmental consultant.
2. Expand the membership and impact of our staff and volunteer environmental network.
3. Develop opportunities to raise awareness of environmental concerns through The Reader Bookshelf and programming.

Ambition and Quality

1. Deliver the Teaching Associate Pathway for volunteers.
2. Improve quality assurance including self-development for practitioners.
3. Clearer articulation of our approach to literature across publications and programing.

Financial review

The total income in FY2022/23 was £4,241,373, an increase from £4,064,045 in 2021/22 brought about by an increase in grants receivable for core activities and an increase in trading income.

The net expenditure for the year is £670,776, however the charity incurred depreciation costs of £266,427 in relation to the Storybarn, Mansion House and grant funded fixtures and the associated movements from restricted and designated funds to free reserves resulted in a deficit on charitable activities of £404,349, inclusive of a net loss in the sum of £23,146 from Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company.

Principle income sources

During 2022/23 The Reader Organisation's income was split across the following sources:
33% grants and donations for core activities
29% grant and commissioned delivery of Shared Reading (our principal charitable activity) and training of individuals to undertake Shared Reading
35% trading income from our subsidiary, Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company
3% event income (principally from the Storybarn)
<1% Investment income

Reserves

The Reserves now stand at £5,858,940.

Reserves include £4,825,022 of restricted funds relating to Calderstones Mansion House which is reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year and will transfer to a designated fund upon satisfaction of restrictions within the grants.

The Group unrestricted funds total £1,033,918. This includes £294,138 of designated funds. The remaining £739,780 general unrestricted funds represents our free reserves.

Designated funds include:

- £129,135 that represents expenditure on the Storybarn building which is being released over a 10-year period (the useful economic life of the refurbishments undertaken within the building)
- £85,583 of designated funds that represents expenditure on the Mansion House building which is being released over 50 years (the useful economic life of the refurbishments undertaken within the building)
- £16,008 grant funded fixtures which is being released over a 3-year period (the useful economic life of the capitalised fixtures)
- £63,412 Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund, a provision for future major repairs to the building

Reserves policy

The charity's reserves policy is to build up unrestricted reserves sufficient to enable the charity's core running costs to be continued for a period of three months, but where possible six months, should regular funding becoming unobtainable. Three months core running costs equates to around £452,265. As of 31 March 2023 the level of unrestricted, undesignated reserves amounts to £739,780 which equates to five months core running costs.

Public Benefit

Activities provided by The Reader are funded by: public sector bodies; charitable trusts; partner organisation; and donations. Weekly Shared Reading Groups are free at the point of entry and the Programme at Calderstones is a mixture of paid ticketed events and free community activity. The trustees have paid due regard to guidance published by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Funders and Commissioners

Arts Council England
Barton Moss Secure Care Centre
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust
Cheltenham Festivals Limited
City Bridge Trust
City of Doncaster Council Public Health
Conwy Libraries
Dorset County Council Library Service
Eleanor Rathbone Charitable Trust
Hackney Council Libraries
Hammersmith and Fulham Libraries and Archives Service
Haringey Council (Library Service)
Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service
Jewish Care
John Lewis and Partners Liverpool
King's College London
Liverpool Charity and Voluntary Services
Liverpool City Council
Mayoral Inclusive Growth Fund
Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust
Mo Siewcharran Memorial Fund
NHS Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group
NHS Knowsley Clinical Commissioning Group
NHS Wigan Borough Clinical Commissioning Group
Northern Ireland Public Health and Social Care
Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust
Players of People's Postcode Lottery
Sefton Virtual School
Somerset Council
St Giles Trust
St Monica Trust Community Impact
Steve Morgan Foundation
Steve Morgan Foundation/DCMS Community Match Challenge
Sutton Council's Cultural Services
The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington
The Elizabeth L Rathbone Trust
The Evan Cornish Foundation
The Granada Foundation
The Hemby Charitable Trust
The Limbourne Trust
The National Lottery Heritage Fund
The Rayne Foundation
The Unwin Charitable Trust
Virtual School Liverpool, Liverpool City Council
Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council
Woodchurch High School

Investment Power and Policy

Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the charity has the power to invest in any lawful way the trustees wish, after having obtained such advice from a financial expert as the trustees consider necessary having regard to the suitability of investments and the need for diversification. All reserves are held in deposit accounts and no investments were made during the year.

Risk Review

The Reader is committed to sound business practice and the embedding of risk management into the organisation's culture. Both the Reader and the Calderstones Mansion House CIC have risk registers that are used to gain a comprehensive view of the work of the organisations, and reveals strengths and opportunities as well as weaknesses. Risk assessments involve staff from across the organisation and the formal risk registers are reviewed by the Audit Committee at each meeting, with high level risks being reviewed by the Board. The register details the steps and procedures in place to mitigate the risks.

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Structure, governance and management

The Reader Organisation is a registered charity and also a company limited by guarantee. It is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association that were updated and adopted on the 13th November 2017.

The charity is governed by a Board of Trustees which must be made up of between three and twelve individuals. The board meets four times a year.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair)
Mr H Biddell
Dr R M Hussey CB,OBE,DL
Mr P L Davies
Mr P K Sood
Mrs S Fletcher
Dr J Hamilton (Retired 1 September 2022)
Dr H Willows
Mr O Alake
Mr NI Atkinson

The company secretary is Jennifer Martin.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute the sum not exceeding £10 in the event of a winding up.

Trustees Recruitment, Induction and Training

When a trustee vacancy arises a recruitment process including advertisement, application and interview as necessary is overseen by the nominations committee in line with good practice guidance. The Reader has designed a comprehensive induction for new Trustees that includes but is not limited to:

- A briefing from the Chair
- Meeting with other Trustees
- Meeting with each of the Directors' Group
- Shared Reading with Directors' Group
- Meeting as many Reader staff as possible at the first opportunity

This programme of meetings is accompanied by an induction pack that includes useful papers such as:

- The Reader's Business Plan
- Copies of previous Board minutes
- The Reader's Memorandum and Articles of Association
- Charity Commission guidance 'Being a Trustee' and 'The Essential Trustee: What you need to know'
- A welcome letter from the Chair
- Trustee role description
- Latest annual report and final accounts
- Vision, mission and key facts
- Information on conflict of interests

A Committee structure is in place to support the Trustees in ensuring good governance. During the financial year there have been two Committees in operation: (I) the Audit Committee, which oversees governance and risk (ii) the Nominations Committee which oversees Trustee appointments.

The Calderstones Mansion House CIC has its own Board of seven Directors. There are four members of The Reader Board who sit on the Calderstones CIC Board of Directors. Minutes of the CIC Board are submitted to The Reader Board as parent company. The Audit Committee oversees the work of Calderstones Mansion House CIC as well as The Reader.

The Trustees have appointed a Director to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity.

Senior Staff Remuneration

The Reader pays salaries according to a salary band system. Banding is based on the responsibilities attached to roles. One member of staff received remuneration over £60,000 in the financial year.

Staff and Volunteers

The trustees acknowledge the commitment and dedication of the charity's staff and volunteers which has been critical to the success of the organisation over the course of the year. Without the generosity of these people, who regularly go above and beyond what is asked of them, The Reader would not have reached as many people or helped change as many lives.

Auditor

At the Annual General Meeting in November 2016 it was agreed that a tender exercise should be undertaken for the appointment of Auditors to ensure value for money was being achieved for the Charity. This resulted in McLintocks (now Xeinadin Audit Limited) being appointed by special resolution of the Board of Directors in May 2017. The Board undertook a further tender exercise in 2021 which resulted in McLintocks (now Xeinadin Audit Limited) being re-appointed at the meeting in September 2021 for a three year period with review by the Audit Committee each year and option to extend to a five year period.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

The Trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

A. S. Marsland.

Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair)

Dated: 14 September 2023

THE READER ORGANISATION

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The trustees, who are also the directors of The Reader Organisation for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company Law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;

- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

THE READER ORGANISATION

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF THE READER ORGANISATION

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Reader Organisation (the 'charity') and it's subsidiary for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the consolidated statement of financial activities, the consolidated and charity balance sheet, the consolidated statement of cash flows and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group and charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF THE READER ORGANISATION

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the Trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the Trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate and proper accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of Trustees' responsibilities, the trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group and charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with the Acts and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the group through discussions with trustees and other management, and from our knowledge and experience of charity sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the group, including the Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2011, data protection, anti-bribery, employment, food hygiene and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management team and inspecting legal correspondence; and identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the group's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management team as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- reviewing correspondence with HMRC and relevant regulators.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF THE READER ORGANISATION

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and to the regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company, the charitable company's members as a body,and the charitable company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Helen Furlong FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Xelnadin Audit Limited

14 September 2023

Statutory Auditor

2 Hilliards Court
Chester Business Park
Chester
Cheshire
CH4 9QP

THE READER ORGANISATION

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Income and endowments from:							
Donations and legacies	3	1,435,503	225	1,435,728	1,152,633	-	1,152,633
Charitable activities	4	783,133	543,631	1,326,764	847,779	901,618	1,749,397
Other trading activities	5	1,471,576	-	1,471,576	1,161,356	-	1,161,356
Investments	6	2,091	-	2,091	659	-	659
Other income	7	5,214	-	5,214	-	-	-
Total income		3,697,517	543,856	4,241,373	3,162,427	901,618	4,064,045
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	8	1,439,377	-	1,439,377	995,118	-	995,118
Charitable activities	9	2,928,916	543,856	3,472,772	2,300,756	901,618	3,202,374
Total resources expended		4,368,293	543,856	4,912,149	3,295,874	901,618	4,197,492
Net outgoing resources before transfers		(670,776)	-	(670,776)	(133,447)	-	(133,447)
Gross transfers between funds		205,732	(205,732)	-	204,807	(204,807)	-
Net expenditure for the year/ Net movement in funds		(465,044)	(205,732)	(670,776)	71,360	(204,807)	(133,447)
Fund balances at 1 April 2022		1,498,962	5,030,754	6,529,716	1,427,605	5,235,560	6,663,165
Fund balances at 31 March 2023		1,033,918	4,825,022	5,858,940	1,498,965	5,030,753	6,529,718

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

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

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

THE READER ORGANISATION

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	**15**		5,081,355		5,338,789
Current assets					
Stocks	**17**	28,227		22,048	
Debtors	**18**	327,119		466,171	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,196,246		1,688,965	
		1,551,592		2,177,184	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**20**	(774,007)		(986,255)	
Net current assets			777,585		1,190,929
Total assets less current liabilities			5,858,940		6,529,718
Income funds					
Restricted funds	**24**		4,825,022		5,030,753
Unrestricted funds	**25**		1,033,918		1,498,965
			5,858,940		6,529,718

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 14 September 2023

A. S. Marsland

Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair)
Trustee

Company Registration No. 06607389

THE READER ORGANISATION

CHARITY BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	**15**		5,081,355		5,338,789
Investments	**16**		1		1
			5,081,356		5,338,790
Current assets					
Debtors falling due within one year	**19**	554,981		663,937	
Cash at bank and in hand		776,570		1,384,099	
		1,331,551		2,048,036	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**21**	(530,824)		(857,108)	
Net current assets			800,727		1,190,928
Total assets less current liabilities			5,882,083		6,486,757
Income funds					
Restricted funds	**24**		4,825,021		5,030,753
Unrestricted funds	**26**		1,057,062		1,498,965
			5,882,083		6,529,718

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 14 September 2023

A S. Marsland

Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair)
Trustee

Company Registration No. 06607389

THE READER ORGANISATION

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023		2022	
		£	£	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash absorbed by operations	**34**		(459,562)		(794,407)
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(38,878)		(29,818)	
Proceeds on disposal of tangible fixed assets		3,630		5,428	
Interest received		2,091		659	
Net cash used in investing activities			(33,157)		(23,731)
Financing activities					
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents			(492,719)		(818,138)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			1,688,965		2,507,103
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			1,196,246		1,688,965

1 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

2 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Reader Organisation is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is The Mansion House, Calderstones Park, Liverpool, Merseyside, L18 3JB.

2.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's [governing document], the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended), FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

2.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

2.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the accounts.

2.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

2 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

Voluntary income include donations which are accounted for as received by the charity.

These items are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability. Such income is only deferred when:

- The donor specifies that the grant or donation must only be used in future accounting years; or
- The donor has imposed conditions which must be met before the charity has unconditional settlement.

Investment income relates to bank interest receivable.

Income from charitable activities includes income received under contract or where entitlement to grant funding is subject to specific performance conditions and is recognised as earned as the related goods or services are provided. Grant income included within this category provides funding to advance the education of the public in reading and the appreciation of literature.

Grants received in advance of the period in which the funder requires the expenditure to be applied will be reflected in deferred income within the balance sheet.

Income from the trading subsidiary turnover represents amounts received and receivable for goods supplied (excluding value added tax an voluntary gratuities left by customers for the benefit of employees) and is recognised at the point of sale.

2.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred.

Charitable activities expenditure includes both direct costs and support costs relating to these activities.

Governance costs include those incurred in the governance of the charity and its assets and are primarily associated with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

2 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

2.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Leasehold Improvements	Over a period of 10 years. Mansion house refurbishment over 50 years
Fixtures and fittings	Over a period of 3 years. Leasehold fit out over 10 years
Computers	Over a period of 3 years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

All assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised at cost.

2 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

2.7 Fixed asset investments

Fixed asset investments are initially measured at transaction price excluding transaction costs, and are subsequently measured at fair value at each reporting date. Changes in fair value are recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year. Transaction costs are expensed as incurred.

A subsidiary is an entity controlled by the charity. Control is the power to govern the financial and operating policies of the entity so as to obtain benefits from its activities.

2.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

2.9 Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value, after making due allowance for obsolete and slow moving items.

Net realisable value is the estimated selling price less all estimated costs of completion and costs to be incurred in marketing, selling and distribution.

2.10 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

2.11 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

2 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

2.12 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

2.13 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

2.14 Consolidation

The group financial statements consolidate the financial statements of The Reader Organisation and its subsidiary Calderstones Mansion House CIC, drawn up to 31 March 2023. The results of the subsidiary are consolidated for the period from the date on which control passed.

Business combinations are accounted for under the purchase method. Where necessary, adjustments are made to the financial statements of the subsidiary to bring the accounting policies used into line with those used by the parent charitable company. All intra-group transactions, balances, income and expenses are eliminated on consolidation.

Advantage is being taken of Section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 not to present the Parent Company's Statement of Financial Activities including Income and Expenditure Account.

3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total Unrestricted funds	
	2023	2023	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Donations and gifts	14,109	225	14,334	28,940
Grants receivable for core activities	1,421,394	-	1,421,394	1,123,693
	1,435,503	225	1,435,728	1,152,633

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total Unrestricted funds	
	2023	2023	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Grants receivable for core activities				
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	-	-	-	25,933
Arts Council England National Portfolio Office	178,220	-	178,220	178,220
People's Postcode Lottery	1,243,174	-	1,243,174	879,072
CJRS grant	-	-	-	468
Tudor Trust	-	-	-	40,000
	1,421,394	-	1,421,394	1,123,693

4 Charitable activities

	Shared reading 2023	Storybarn 2023	Total 2023	Shared reading 2022	Storybarn 2022	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Commissions & Training	674,410	-	674,410	751,144	-	751,144
Grants	543,631	-	543,631	901,618	-	901,618
Events income	14,725	93,998	108,723	20,682	75,953	96,635
	1,232,766	93,998	1,326,764	1,673,444	75,953	1,749,397
Analysis by fund						
Unrestricted funds	689,135	93,998	783,133	771,826	75,953	847,779
Restricted funds	543,631	-	543,631	901,618	-	901,618
	1,232,766	93,998	1,326,764	1,673,444	75,953	1,749,397
Grants related to charitable activities						
The Garfield Weston Foundation	-	-	-	143,776	-	143,776
Knowsley CCG	18,030	-	18,030	17,729	-	17,729
National Lottery Community Fund	-	-	-	48,635	-	48,635
National Lottery Heritage Fund	119,700	-	119,700	-	-	-
Reading Retreat	26,555	-	26,555	-	-	-
City Bridge	25,457	-	25,457	23,540	-	23,540
BBC Children In Need	-	-	-	29,915	-	29,915
Esmee Fairbarn Foundation	-	-	-	51,863	-	51,863
Steve Morgan Foundation and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport	248,917	-	248,917	290,050	-	290,050
St Monica's Trust Community Impact	9,085	-	9,085	-	-	-
Somerset County Council	33,051	-	33,051	41,586	-	41,586
Steve Morgan Foundation	-	-	-	137,953	-	137,953
Unwin Charitable Trust	30,000	-	30,000	-	-	-
The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington	6,432	-	6,432	19,104	-	19,104
Others	26,404	-	26,404	97,467	-	97,467
	543,631	-	543,631	901,618	-	901,618

5 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £
Cafe,ice-cream parlour and other income	1,471,576	1,161,356

6 Income from investments

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £
Interest receivable	2,091	659

7 Other income

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Insurance claim	5,214	-

8 Raising funds

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £
Trading costs		
Operating costs	742,315	514,098
Other staff costs	2,607	2,233
Staff costs	694,455	478,787
Trading costs	1,439,377	995,118

9 Charitable activities

	Shared reading 2023	Storybarn 2023	Total 2023	Shared reading 2022	Storybarn 2022	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	2,080,548	110,286	2,190,834	1,748,212	85,707	1,833,919
Depreciation and impairment	-	44,528	44,528	-	60,706	60,706
Other expenditure	363,446	25,072	388,518	434,683	22,225	456,908
	2,443,994	179,886	2,623,880	2,182,895	168,638	2,351,533
Share of support costs (see note 10)	776,881	58,475	835,356	804,871	33,536	838,407
Share of governance costs (see note 10)	12,589	947	13,536	12,097	337	12,434
	3,233,464	239,308	3,472,772	2,999,863	202,511	3,202,374
Analysis by fund						
Unrestricted funds	2,689,608	239,308	2,928,916	2,098,245	202,511	2,300,756
Restricted funds	543,856	-	543,856	901,618	-	901,618
	3,233,464	239,308	3,472,772	2,999,863	202,511	3,202,374

10 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2023	Support costs	Governance costs	2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	371,383	-	371,383	384,460	-	384,460
Depreciation	248,152	-	248,152	220,457	-	220,457
Other costs	215,821	-	215,821	233,490	-	233,490
Audit fees	-	9,563	9,563	-	9,000	9,000
Accountancy	-	3,187	3,187	-	3,000	3,000
Trustee expenses	-	786	786	-	435	435
	835,356	13,536	848,891	838,407	12,435	850,842
Analysed between						
Charitable activities	835,356	13,536	848,892	838,407	12,434	850,841

11 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Shared Reading	99	93
Support Services	10	13
Storybarn	13	10
Calderstones Mansion House CIC	53	35
Total	175	151

Employment costs	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	2,889,912	2,416,442
Social security costs	217,442	160,474
Other pension costs	149,318	120,250
	3,256,672	2,697,166

Remuneration of key management personnel

Total remuneration received during the year by key management personnel amounted to £429,066 (2022: £354,457).

Retirement benefit schemes

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the Charity in an independently administered fund.

The charge to the statement of financial activities in respect of defined contribution schemes was £149,318 (2022: £120,250).

There were outstanding contributions in respect of defined contribution schemes at 31 March 2023 of nil (2022: £NIL).

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000.

Remuneration of key management personnel
The remuneration of key management personnel is as follows.

12 Trustees

None of the trustees received any remuneration during either the current or previous year, and trustees were reimbursed £786 for travelling expenses (2022: £435).

13 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

14 Calderstones Mansion House CIC

A summary of the results of the subsidiary is shown below:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Income	1,420,481	1,092,156
Expenditure	(1,443,627)	(1,092,156)
	(23,146)	-

Aggregate assets and liabilities

Current assets	480,147	348,999
Current liabilities	(503,292)	(348,998)
	(23,145)	1

15 Tangible fixed assets - Group and Company

	Leasehold Improvements	Fixtures and fittings	Computers	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost				
At 1 April 2022	4,919,542	1,306,923	38,284	6,264,749
Additions	-	36,277	2,601	38,878
Disposals	(3,630)	-	-	(3,630)
At 31 March 2023	4,915,912	1,343,200	40,885	6,299,997
Depreciation and impairment				
At 1 April 2022	510,880	386,187	28,896	925,963
Depreciation charged in the year	134,215	151,529	6,935	292,679
At 31 March 2023	645,095	537,716	35,831	1,218,642
Carrying amount				
At 31 March 2023	4,270,817	805,484	5,054	5,081,355
At 31 March 2022	4,408,665	920,737	9,387	5,338,789

16 Fixed asset investments - Group undertakings

The charity owns the whole of the issued share capital of the following subsidary undertaking which is registered in England and has the same registered office as the charity.

Subsidiary	Principal activity
Calderstones Mansion House CIC	Restaurants and cafes

The carrying value of the investment in the financial statements is £1 (2022:£1).

17 Stocks - Group

	2023	2022
	£	£
Goods for resale	28,227	22,048

18 Debtors - Group

	2023	2022
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Trade debtors	132,860	83,596
Other debtors	32,091	238,390
Prepayments and accrued income	162,168	144,185
	327,119	466,171

19 Debtors - Charity

	2023	2022
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Trade debtors	107,704	62,561
Amounts owed by subsidiary undertakings	260,106	219,851
Other debtors	32,091	238,390
Prepayments and accrued income	155,080	143,135
	554,981	663,937

20 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year - Group

	Notes	2023	2022
		£	£
Other taxation and social security		50,435	28,060
Deferred income	22	561,809	711,376
Trade creditors		127,922	191,034
Other creditors		4,057	2,664
Accruals		29,784	53,121
		774,007	986,255

21 Creditors:amounts falling due within one year - Charity

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Deferred income	23	433,334	653,846
Trade creditors		82,147	161,837
Other creditors		2,202	1,721
Accruals and deferred income		13,141	39,704
		530,824	857,108

22 Deferred Income - Group

	2023 £	2022 £
Other deferred income	561,809	711,376

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Balance at 1 April 2022	711,376	1,111,043
Amounts received in year	1,955,055	1,674,109
Amounts credited to statement of financial activities	(2,104,622)	(2,073,777)
Balance at 31 March 2023	561,809	711,376

23 Deferred Income - Charity

	2023 £	2022 £
Other deferred income	433,334	653,846

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Balance at 1 April 2022	653,846	1,085,090
Amounts received in year	1,736,305	1,602,964
Amounts credited to statement of financial activities	(1,956,817)	(2,035,086)
Balance at 31 March 2023	433,334	653,846

24 Restricted funds - Group & Charity

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

		Movement in funds				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Shared Reading	-	901,618	(901,618)	-	-	543,856	(543,856)	-	-
Calderstones Mansion House	5,235,560	-	-	(204,807)	5,030,754	-	-	(205,732)	4,825,022
	5,235,559	901,618	(901,618)	(204,807)	5,030,754	543,856	(543,856)	(205,732)	4,825,022

Shared Reading
Shared Reading includes our core work of delivering shared reading groups. This is funded through grants and commissions (please refer to notes 3 and 4 for further information).

Calderstones Mansion House
The Calderstones Mansion House is the charities headquarters based at our site within Calderstones Park. Grants have been received from Heritage Lottery, Liverpool City Council, Tudor Trust and other funders to refurbish the building. The money for this project has been split between restricted funds and a designated unrestricted fund depending on the nature of the income received. Following the completion of the building works and satisfaction of the restrictions within the grants, the restricted fund will be transferred to the designated unrestricted fund where it will be reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year.

25 Unrestricted funds - Group

The unrestricted funds of the charity also include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General unrestricted	764,297	3,162,427	(3,142,969)	58,964	842,716	3,697,517	(3,984,787)	184,334	739,780
Storybarn Building	218,191	-	(44,528)	-	173,663	-	(44,528)	-	129,135
Calderstones Mansion House	85,583	-	-	-	85,583	-	-	-	85,583
Grant funded fixtures	48,353	-	(16,178)	-	32,175	-	(16,167)	-	16,008
Mansion House support fund	54,181	-	-	124,829	179,010	-	(179,010)	-	-
Personnel investment fund	143,000	-	(57,000)	-	86,000	-	(86,000)	-	-
IT re-structure and infrastructure fund	93,000	-	(35,199)	-	57,801	-	(57,801)	-	-
Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund	21,000	-	-	21,014	42,014	-	-	21,398	63,412
	1,427,605	3,162,427	(3,295,874)	204,807	1,498,962	3,697,517	(4,368,293)	205,732	1,033,918

25 Unresticted funds - Group

(Continued)

Storybarn Building
The Storybarn represents the capital cost of the building. This fund will be reduced by the associated depreciation charge each year.

Calderstones Mansion House
The Calderstones Mansion House is the charities headquarters based at our site within Calderstones Park. Grants have been received from Heritage Lottery, Liverpool City Council, Tudor Trust and other funders to refurbish the building. The money for this project has been split between restricted funds and a designated unrestricted fund depending on the nature of the income received. Following the completion of the building works and satisfaction of the restrictions within the grants, the restricted fund will be transferred to the designated unrestricted fund where it will be reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year.

Mansion House support fund
This represents a re-investment of a charitable donation from the Charity's subsidiary, Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company, towards the site and operations that underpin our charitable work.

Personnel investment fund
The Trustees have designated a Personnel Investment Fund to facilitate growth by aligning workforce planning to strategic plans. This fund will enable the organisation to invest in the future through the implementation of a new reward and recognition programme for staff and enablement of succession planning.

IT re-structure and infrastructure fund
The Board of Trustees recognise technology's strategic importance as a critical component of the Charity's activities and have designated an IT re-structure and infrastructure fund to invest in The Charity's technology capabilities.

Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund
The sinking fund is set up to provide a provision for future major repairs to Calderstones Mansion House. The agreed amount to be transferred each year from the general reserves is in the region of £21,000.

26 Unrestricted funds - Charity

The unrestricted funds of the charity also include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

	Movement in funds						Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2021 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Gains and losses £	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Gains and losses £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
General unrestricted	764,297	3,162,427	(3,142,969)	58,964		842,719	2,277,036	(2,540,240)	183,409		762,924
Storybarn Building	218,191	-	(44,528)	-	-	173,663	-	(44,528)	-	-	129,135
Calderstones Mansion House	85,583	-	-	-		85,583	-	-	-		85,583
Grant funded fixtures	48,353	-	(16,178)	-	-	32,175	-	(16,167)	-	-	16,008
Mansion House support fund	54,181	-	-	124,829	-	179,010	-	(179,010)	-	-	-
Personnel investment fund	143,000	-	(57,000)	-	-	86,000	-	(86,000)	-	-	-
IT re-structure and infrastructure fund	93,000	-	(35,199)	-	-	57,801	-	(57,801)	-	-	-
Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund	21,000	-	-	21,014	-	42,014	-	-	21,398	-	63,412
	1,427,605	3,162,427	(3,295,874)	204,807		1,498,965	2,277,036	(2,923,746)	204,807	-	1,057,062

26 Unresticted funds - Charity

(Continued)

Storybarn Building
The Storybarn represents the capital cost of the building. This fund will be reduced by the associated depreciation charge each year.

Calderstones Mansion House
The Calderstones Mansion House is the charities headquarters based at our site within Calderstones Park. Grants have been received from Heritage Lottery, Liverpool City Council, Tudor Trust and other funders to refurbish the building. The money for this project has been split between restricted funds and a designated unrestricted fund depending on the nature of the income received. Following the completion of the building works and satisfaction of the restrictions within the grants, the restricted fund will be transferred to the designated unrestricted fund where it will be reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year.

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27 Analysis of net assets between funds - Group

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2023 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	256,333	4,825,022	5,081,355	308,036	5,030,753	5,338,789
Current assets/(liabilities)	777,585	-	777,585	1,190,929	-	1,190,929
	1,033,918	4,825,022	5,858,940	1,498,965	5,030,753	6,529,718

28 Analysis of net assets between funds - Charity

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2023 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	256,334	4,825,021	5,081,355	308,036	5,030,753	5,338,789
Investments	1	-	1	1	-	1
Current assets/(liabilities)	800,727	-	800,727	1,190,928	-	1,190,928
	1,057,062	4,825,021	5,882,083	1,498,965	5,030,753	6,529,718

29 Related party transactions

No guarantees have been given or received.

P Hughes is a director for the Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company and does not receive any additional remuneration for this role. However during the year she received £1,600 for the provision of staff training & coaching to The Reader Organisation.

30 Company limited by guarantee

The charitable company is limited by guarantee and has no share capital. Every member of the charity undertakes to contribute to the assets of the charity in the event of being wound up while he or she is a member or within one year of ceasing to be a member for debts and liabilities of the charity contracted before he or she ceases to be a member, such amounts as may be required not exceeding £10.

31 Operating lease commitments

At the reporting end date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Within one year	52,838	30,838
Between two and five years	154,568	113,764
In over five years	2,957,694	2,985,336
	3,165,100	3,129,938

32 Events after the reporting date

Calderstones Mansion House CIC realised a loss in 2022-23, this was in relation to assets expensed in year due to ongoing discussions held around the probable closure of The Reader Bar and Restaurant. An EGM of the Calderstones Mansion House CIC Board was held on 23rd August 2023 and the Board agreed that the Restaurant should close. This was due to a combination of factors, including the need to be financially sustainable and provide a source of unrestricted income to the Charity over the coming years. The Restaurant closed on 2nd September 2023.

33 Analysis of changes in net funds

The charity had no material debt during the year.

34 Cash generated from operations

	2023	2022
	£	£
Deficit for the year	(670,776)	(133,447)
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(2,091)	(659)
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	292,679	281,163
Movements in working capital:		
(Increase) in stocks	(6,179)	(4,892)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	139,054	(188,111)
(Decrease) in creditors	(62,682)	(348,794)
(Decrease) in deferred income	(149,567)	(399,667)
Cash absorbed by operations	(459,562)	(794,407)

THE READER ORGANISATION

England & Wales - Charity number 1126806

Accounts

Charity registration number 1126806 (England and Wales)

Charity registration number SC043054 (Scotland)

Company registration number 06607389 (England and Wales)

THE READER ORGANISATION

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022



McLintocks

Xeinadin Group

THE READER ORGANISATION

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair)	
	Mr H Biddell	
	Dr R M Hussey CB,OBE,DL	
	Mr P L Davies	
	Mr P K Sood	
	Mrs S Fletcher	
	Dr J Hamilton	(Appointed 17 May 2021)
	Dr H Willows	(Appointed 17 May 2021)
	Mr O Alake	(Appointed 17 May 2021)
	Mr NI Atkinson	(Appointed 17 May 2021)
Secretary	Ms J Martin	
Founder and Director	Ms J Davis	
Chief Operating Officer	Ms A Horne	
Director of Finance	Ms V Hopton	
Charity number (England and Wales)	1126806	
Charity number (Scotland)	SC043054	
Company number	06607389	
Registered office	The Mansion House Calderstones Park Liverpool Merseyside L18 3JB	
Auditor	Xeinadin Audit Limited 2 Hilliards Court Chester Business Park Chester Cheshire CH4 9QP	
Bankers	Santander UK Plc Bridle Road Bootle Merseyside L30 4GB	

THE READER ORGANISATION

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THE READER ORGANISATION

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Chair & Director's Statement

A Note from the Chair, Anita Marsland and the Founder Director, Jane Davis

The Sycamore

In the place that is my own place, whose earth
I am shaped in and must bear, there is an old tree growing,
a great sycamore that is a wondrous healer of itself.
Fences have been tied to it, nails driven into it,
hacks and whittles cut in it, the lightning has burned it.
There is no year it has flourished in
that has not harmed it. There is a hollow in it
that is its death, though its living brims whitely
at the lip of the darkness and flows outward.
Over all its scars has come the seamless white
of the bark. It bears the gnarls of its history
healed over. It has risen to a strange perfection
in the warp and bending of its long growth.
It has gathered all accidents into its purpose.
It has become the intention and radiance of its dark fate.
It is a fact, sublime, mystical and unassailable.
In all the country there is no other like it.
I recognize in it a principle, an indwelling
the same as itself, and greater, that I would be ruled by.
I see that it stands in its place and feeds upon it,
and is fed upon, and is native, and maker.

Wendell Berry

This was a year of gradual readjustment to a re-set normal life: a scarring over and some healing took place. Of course, there is much further to go, but we have come some way from the darkest, painful days of the Coronavirus pandemic in our last annual report.

As we sit down to write, it is hard to recall what life was like at the beginning of this reporting period in April 2021. But reading through the organisational reports it is clear to see that, during this time, The Reader has, as the poem says 'gathered all accidents into its purpose.'

We began our year with the continued development of the Literature Directorate and the beginning of the search for a Director of Literature, as part of the Founder's succession plan. The Literature Directorate is key to enabling the Founder to retire, and was developed with these aims:

1. Ensure Succession
2. Be the Golden Thread of Literature running through the organisation's entire programme of work
3. Curate Great and Diverse Literature
4. Model and Develop Quality Practice
5. Know Who We Are and What We Do

A new development during this period was our 'Just Us' project. This piece of work began with a group of volunteers who are people of colour meeting to read Native Son with Founder Jane Davis and Director of Impact, Geetha Rabindrakumar. This was developed by Geetha into a major initiative which has involved people from across the organisation. This work will continue to help us develop our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion practice into the future. To support the thinking about reading accompanying this work, we appointed Tomiwa Owalade as a consultant in Literature and Race, and we were pleased to have both him and our coach in thinking about race, Rebekah Del Sol, in conversation at our bi-annual staff awayday to share thoughts on Native Son.

We were also lucky enough to receive Covid recovery funding that allowed us to invest in the creation of our own e-learning platform. This year, Dr Clare Ellis, Head of Teaching and Learning, and her team have built on that investment and are now offering all our courses on this interactive platform. This has proved to be a game-changing achievement (and another previously unimaginable development and outcome of Covid) which has helped us to provide a more flexible training offer both at home and internationally.

As we look back over the 2021-2022 period, we especially want to celebrate the tenacious hard work and commitment from all our Operations, Facilities and Programmes staff. It was so cheering when, with great trepidation, we were able to begin our programme work again, often masked and out of doors. Through the Storybarn we provided outdoor summer and festive activities for children and families with two story trail adventures in the park, continuing our successful partnership with leading independent publisher, Walker Books.

And it was moving, in the autumn, when we were able to launch Gravity – a festival which fuses great writing and serious conversation. Cautiously, but very excitedly, hundreds of people attended in-person events at the Mansion, and, with tech confidence gained during Covid, we were able to live-stream many of the events to a national and international audience. Some of our international partners actually visited – in real life – and it was a delight to host the Danish Reading Society and share – face to face, in a room! - our experiences as part of the festival.

We hosted BBC Radio 5 Live's Drive Show at Calderstones for a special programme on the benefits of reading aloud. During the show, Greg Harwood-Jenkins, our young people's mentor, talked with Jack from our Young People's Programme about the benefits of reading. It was so inspiring to hear these two young men talking about the personal impact of our work, alongside members of the Broadgreen Hospital Chronic Pain group – very different demographics united in their ability to speak inspiringly about what Shared Reading gives them. In March 2022, we were delighted to win the 'Outstanding Contribution to Culture Peoples' Choice Award' – voted for by the public – at the Liverpool City Region Culture & Creativity Awards, and it was great that Greg was able to join Director of Transformation, Jemma Guerrier in attending the awards ceremony.

Over 500 volunteers continued to donate their time, energy and commitment to helping us get Shared Reading into the hands of those who need it most, and to support our programme at Calderstones. Thanks to The National Lottery Heritage Fund we have also been able to offer five new heritage focussed volunteer roles at the Mansion House. We are so grateful to our Volunteer Support team, who tripled the number of practical and wellbeing support sessions offered to volunteers during this period. That's a short thing to write, but it was a big piece of work at a time of great need, and was a much-valued achievement.

Our People team worked hard to support staff and volunteers during a further year of continued change and uncertainty, and also delivered a significant Reward and Recognition project, which resulted in a step-change in the way The Reader's pay and reward is structured. This work represented a major investment in our workforce. Congratulations and thanks to the team, and to all who helped with this important project.

The early part of this period also saw us recruit new Trustees as well as new Directors for the Calderstones CIC Board. That was a heartening and inspiring process as we were fortunate enough to meet good people who were generous with their time and have become tremendously committed to The Reader. Joining the Board were:

Jennifer Hamilton
Neil Atkinson
Olu Alake
Helen Willows

In the same recruitment round, Kelly Spells and Pauline Hughes were appointed as Directors of the Calderstones Mansion House CIC Board.

The organisation is enormously grateful to all its funders and loyal supporters, but children and young people suffered disproportionately during the pandemic, so we were especially grateful to the Steve Morgan Foundation for a grant of £120,000 towards a two-year continuation of our Children and Young Person's First Page project.

We were also extremely fortunate to be granted an additional one-off award of £600,000 from the People's Postcode Lottery and its players, which has supported our long-term strategic plan as we continued to rebuild post-Covid. This allowed us to make our training available to more partner organisations and to support the implementation of our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion strategy. People's Postcode Lottery continues to be a loyal and highly flexible core funder: we're extremely grateful to all players.

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Finally, 2021-22 was a year in which all colleagues and members of our movement continued to flex organisational thinking, creativity and delivery of work. As with the previous 'lockdown' year, the amount the organisation has done, and done with courage, commitment and tenacity, is, frankly, remarkable. We want to thank all our readers and group members, volunteers and supporters, colleagues and trustees for their ongoing and encouraging support and challenge.

Jane Davis, Founder and Director

Anita Marsland, Chair of Trustees

A Marsland

Chairman

Date: 12 September 2022

THE READER ORGANISATION

TRUSTEES' REPORT REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document (Memorandum and Articles of Association), the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities

Objects of the charity

The charity's objects are to promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of citizens and inhabitants of the United Kingdom and other countries, in particular the advancement of education, the furtherance of health, the relief of poverty, distress and sickness, the promotion of social inclusion and furtherance of community especially through reading and literature based activities.

Our Vision

A world in which everyone has 'something real to carry home when day is done'.

Our Mission

The Reader is bringing about a reading revolution so that everyone can experience and enjoy great literature, which we believe is a tool for helping humans survive and to live well.

Everything we do – from our Shared Reading groups to our social enterprises, from our publications to The Storybarn at Calderstones – brings people together and books to life to make this happen.

During the reporting period, we continued to work to an adapted mission in response to the pandemic:

We aim to help humans survive and live well by providing two services – food to keep body alive for those in most need, and literature for the spirit of all.

In the words of the early female unionists of the US, who recognised that life was not only about basic breadline necessities but also about the ineffable beauty of the world, 'give us bread but give us roses'

Shared Reading and Great Literature: Needed More Than Ever

"Without literature everything felt so dry, I didn't feel rich."
Shared Reading Group Member

The pandemic has had a huge impact on all communities and will continue to shape the environment we work in for some time to come.
In this delicate period of recovery and gradual healing, connecting with rich and complex literature gives us access to our deepest thoughts, emotions and experiences. It provides us with a powerful and shared language that helps us better understand ourselves, each-other and the complex world around us.

Shared Reading Impact: What Our Community Groups Say

95% – 'This activity makes me feel better'
94% – 'Hearing other people's views helps me think differently about things'
95% – 'I look forward to the group as an important event in my week'
81% – 'This activity helps me to connect with others in a deeper way'

"It is ...literally...a vital part of my life and wellbeing"
"The opportunity to have a very special kind of conversation, not available to me in any other of my activities."
"Being able to attend online is crucial to me as I am severely immuno compromised and could not attend a face-to-face session. It has been an amazing support to me during our various lockdowns and my long and continuing period of effectively shielding."

Shared Reading Impact: What Our Volunteers Say

91% – 'Hearing other people's views helps me think differently about things'
74% – 'I now get more from reading'
72% – 'What we've read helps me to understand myself better'

"I enjoy being part of a nationwide organisation with an exciting mission and proven evidence that shared reading aloud really helps wellbeing. Every week I enjoy researching new poems and anticipating how they will excite and engage my group of care home residents. Holding the sessions and seeing how much they are appreciated and getting a really good discussion going really lifts my day."

"A feeling of purpose, a recognition that talents and abilities I have are important and can impact people positively. A sense of unity, a chance to practice being calm and open for the shared benefit of myself and the group"

Our strategic goals for 2017 – 2022
Thanks to our volunteers, staff and supporters, we continued to make strong progress during 2020/21 despite the major challenges faced as a result of COVID. Inevitably we have made changes to the way we deliver our work. We anticipate that many new products developed in response to urgent needs will continue during 21/22.

Our three main ambitions remain;

- Grow Shared Reading so that great literature can help more people to survive and live well in their own communities.
- Successfully establish our organisational home – The Reader at Calderstones – as a new kind of community based on Shared Reading.
- Be a strong, learning organisation that is values-driven and a pioneering place to work, volunteer or participate.

Achievements and performance

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

With Covid restrictions still in place between April and May 2021, the year was one of challenges, re-growth and re-engagement. The Reader remained flexible throughout, continuing to offer activities online and over the phone while we were pleased to expand delivery of in person activities as the year progressed.

Highlight achievements are;

- Reaching over 19,500 adults and children with our Shared Reading activities either in person, by phone and / or online.
- As part of our anti-racism commitment, we started our organisation wide project to use Shared Reading of black literature to start to deepen our consciousness of matters linked to race and racism (we called this "Just Us", named after Claudia Rankine's book of poems and essays which challenges us to enter into conversation with each other and find a way through divisions and silences). Around 160 staff, trustees and volunteers who are people of colour attended sessions focused on reading about race during the year. The responses have been profound for many people, and we intend to continue this work next year, which is supporting development of our Shared Reading and EDI practice.
- A focus on reward and recognition this year resulting in a full articulation of our employee value proposition (The Reader Reward Package) alongside the launch and roll out of a new salary scale more closely aligned to market rates.
- Our first ever commission for reading with children and young people. Liverpool and Sefton Virtual Schools Headteachers have both commissioned our Reading Heroes programme (previously grant funded by BBC Children in Need).
- Securing £243K of grant funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund for 'Making Meaning at Calderstones' a 2-year project.
- Launch of The Reader Bookshelf, a diverse set of poems, stories and non fiction texts spanning ages, cultures and genres. The Bookshelf connects our supporters, volunteers, staff and readers – existing and new – with a special programme of events and activities, and Shared Reading groups that explore a new theme each year. In its first year, the theme for the Bookshelf was 'Walking the Earth'.
- Hosting BBC Radio 5 Live's Drive Show at Calderstones for a special programme highlighting the benefits of reading aloud.
- Winning the 'Outstanding Contribution to Culture Peoples' Choice Award' at the Liverpool City Region Culture & Creativity Awards in March 2022.
- The inaugural Gravity Festival – headline talks, panel discussions, Shared Reading groups and wellbeing workshops where the serious problems of life were spoken about, cried over and laughed at.
- Roll out of the Online Community Hub – a dedicated website for our volunteers providing support and reading resources.

Our strategic goals for 2017 – 2022

In FY21/22, we continued to work towards our three strategic ambitions:

- Grow Shared Reading so that great literature can help more people to survive and live well in their own communities.
- Successfully establish our organisational home – The Reader at Calderstones – as a new kind of community based on Shared Reading.
- Be a strong, learning organisation that is values-driven and a pioneering place to work, volunteer or participate.

We are proud of the way that The Reader innovated and changed when the pandemic hit, developing new services and continuing to reach those who need us most. The pace of change, resilience and innovation needed during the pandemic has confirmed what we at the Reader have known for a number of years; that strong values and entrepreneurial spirit are just as important as a detailed business plan.

With that in mind, and an uncertain global landscape, we conducted a series of strategic planning exercises throughout the year. Each one was an opportunity for us to consider carefully how we will be working with others, working in new ways, working flexibly, working with communities, working boldly, and being clear on who we are. But we also know that being able to respond, learn, grow and continue in difficult and changing times requires lots of flexibility as well as a very strong core. During the year, staff, trustees and volunteers worked together on developing the strategy through a programme of workshops. We produced a transitional business plan for the FY22/23 year, aligning with the Arts Council England extension of the current National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) period for another year. We also started to look further ahead, producing a new ten-year strategy 'Inns on Roads' and a draft three-year business plan to start in FY2023.

2021-22 Operational highlights

1. Growing Shared Reading

"Through reading with others as part of my Shared Reading group I have been able to see a way ahead and it has given me the confidence to start to live my life again. I owe my life to that group and Shared Reading."

Volunteer Reader Leader

During the year over 19,500 adults and children engaged with our Shared Reading activities which were delivered in person, by phone and online.

Our work with Adults

We saw Shared Reading groups begin to resume in person as Covid restrictions lifted. Developments were slow moving and quickly retracted back as the landscape changed with infection rates. Some venues, such as libraries and justice services, remained closed to us throughout the year. Our alternative 'Reader at Home' services, developed during the pandemic enabled us to adapt as required while continuing to support our reading communities.

Over the year, 510 volunteers supported 358 regular weekly activities. We enhanced this offer by sending Lifelines, weekly Shared Reading activity packs, to 340 partners and volunteers so they share it in their community or service. Supported by Steve Morgan Foundation, we launched Life Letters; a new way for our volunteers to share poetry with care home residents when it was impossible to visit them. This new initiative had reached over 300 people by March 2022.

"This group is healing for me – the reading, the other group members, the warmth, the stimulus and spontaneous laughter. It's a time when I can be me"

Volunteer Reader Leader, celebrating 10 years of Shared Reading

"It's like a therapy. It's helpful. I find it more helpful than physio as that's a physical thing and this is a mental thing. Even when that couple of hours is over, you go away thinking about it – for the next hours, day, week. Then you have the next one to look forward to. And that's all keeping your mind occupied and distracted. It's a massive help, it really is. I think all hospitals should have a group. It should be a proper therapy, like CBT."

Group member living with chronic pain

We are hugely grateful for the wonderful network of 270 partners with whom we worked during the year to spread the Reading Revolution to their communities. As part of our EDI strategy, we gave particular focus this year to developing relationships with organisations working in communities with whom we haven't worked before. Support from People's Postcode Lottery enabled us to work with the Afro-Caribbean Carers Centre in Manchester, Croydon BAME centre, Nilari in Bristol and an LGBT friendly housing association in London amongst others.

We were delighted to receive multi-year recommissions from a number of partners, including Wigan Clinical Commissioning Group, Somerset Public Health and Prospect Park Hospital in Berkshire, which enables us to plan longer term for the Shared Reading support we are developing and providing to their communities.

The establishment of our partnerships and volunteer support teams has helped this department to make strides in both elements of our work. Our first 'community' events were very popular at Christmas, despite us having to revert to online delivery in light of the Omicron variant, providing a foundation to rebuild volunteer relationships as restrictions lifted. This has paved the way for 2022-23 plans, when we hope to begin community reengagement in earnest, combining both our now established online support programme and the return of in person events.

Our work in Criminal Justice

"I'll tell you exactly what it brought out in me – I'm an introvert, I'm not an outgoing person, I'm really not. And I don't like groups, I thought I was gonna embarrass myself. The thing I enjoyed the most was the reading. I absolutely loved that reading. It's a massive sense of achievement for me – I'm like a little schoolkid – like I can do this new thing. I was such a Mr. Negative going on the course, and what I got out of it was amazing."

Trained prison officer

During the pandemic and over the course of this year it was challenging to run Shared Reading groups with our Readers in the criminal justice system as we normally would. However, our alternative provision remained largely in place over the year, so we could be flexible to changing public health guidance and changes to prison circumstances. For example, we continued to share the radio programmes we created with Prison Radio Association. Each set of programmes was offered to justice settings on CD, as well as being added to the recently rolled out digital hub menu available to prison residents in an ever-growing number of settings.

We were delighted that despite the challenges to our traditional delivery due to the pandemic, the impact of our work was acknowledged through a new two-year recommission from Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service with a view to expanding the number of prisons in which we work next year. We forged a new relationship with Resettle, a Liverpool based probation service, delivering taster sessions in preparation to expand weekly delivery into their Speke premises come 2022-23. Our work also continued with Northern Ireland Public Health Authority which brings Shared Reading to four prisons in the country, reaching residents in the male, female and juvenile estates.

International Shared Reading

We are now supporting 20 active international partners, with a much larger reach through our Train the Trainer model (approx. 60 Reader Leaders trained in Sweden alone). This activity generates income for The Reader and supports new partners to bring Shared Reading to their countries. Thanks to the increased adoption of technology as a result of the pandemic, we have been able to provide a range of training and support for international partners, and bring them together with the UK Shared Reading community through workshops and networking events.

In Autumn 2021, The Reader hosted an 'inspiration day' for our partners from Laeseforeningen in Denmark who also stayed on to participate in the inaugural Gravity Festival at Calderstones.

Our work with Children and Young People

"One session I was having an awful day and yet I felt listened to, like my baby had some valuable reading time and to feel less alone. Struggling with my mental health means I'm not reading as much as I would like to with my baby so these sessions were so special for us."
Parent, Books & Babies group member

We were delighted to be able to open the doors to the Storybarn fully post-covid in September 2021. Through our weekly engagements of Books & Brambles, Tiny Acorns, Incy Wincy Rhymers, birthday parties, school holiday programming, family fun days and school trips we have provided Storybarn experiences for over 13,000 children and adults. The Storybarn also entered its second year as the North West Partner for Cheltenham Literary Festivals' programme Reading Teachers = Reading Pupils. We have welcomed 14 teachers throughout the year and look forward to continuing and expanding this work in 22/23.

Thanks to support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, we developed both an education and family heritage engagement offer providing meaningful experiences for over 350 children and adults to learn about the history of Calderstones Park and the Neolithic Calder Stones. This has been jointly delivered with our Heritage volunteer and programming team.

Shared Reading with Looked After Children has continued to flourish and we are delighted to have transitioned from Children in Need grant funding to commissions from both Liverpool and Sefton Virtual School. This is a real celebration of the impact of this work and paves the way for future growth and expansion of our Reading Heroes Project.

Our First Page Project began to rebuild momentum following a difficult few years due to Covid-19. We are delighted to have trained 42 partner staff to deliver Shared Reading in their communities and welcomed 12 new partner organisations onto the project.

We provided outdoor summer and festive activities for children and families through two story trail adventure in the park, continuing our successful partnership with a leading independent publisher, Walker Books.

Our Shared Reading in schools has developed from strength to strength with 17 schools engaged across the year, over 150 pupils benefitting from Reading Revolutionaries (peer to peer Shared Reading) and 146 children benefitting from a regular weekly Shared Reading group. We have also developed a teacher training model alongside additional support for those schools delivering Shared Reading with EAL pupils.

Feedback on our work with Children and Young People during the year showed that:

- *"We all thoroughly enjoyed [Books & Brambles]. Jade dragon and her team were amazing, especially with my little boy who has Down syndrome and communicates in Makaton. They were so inclusive and it was so lovely to see."* **Storybarn Books & Brambles group member**
- 81% of families who attended our Storybarn festive story trail, in partnership with Walker Books, agreed that the experience was good for their family's wellbeing.
- 92% of young people that we read with as part of Reading Heroes said they enjoyed taking part.

- 84% of young people engaged in Reading Heroes said 'it was good to talk about my thoughts and feelings.'
- 94% of partner staff and volunteers feel more confident in helping children and parents stay involved during Shared Reading sessions.
- 100% of parents reported they had learnt new ways to make sharing stories fun for both themselves and their child. 8% pupils taking part in our Open Book Project enjoy reading more since taking part in Shared Reading
- 89% of pupils engaged in Shared Reading on our Open Book Project found the experience relaxing.

2. Successfully establishing The Reader at Calderstones

"I enjoy the lovely friendly atmosphere at the Mansion House. All the people I have met here both staff and volunteers are all caring and interesting people. The staff who manage the volunteers make us feel valued.

Volunteering has been especially good for me as when I moved into my flat in March 2020, I didn't know anyone in the area apart from my son and his family. I have now made some good friends - some are volunteers but also from my Shared Reading group. Coming to the Mansion house three times a week has really enhanced my life."

Calderstones Volunteer

"I didn't have any work experience before The Reader but now I'm in a full-time role. I've got responsibility, independence and a chance to progress professionally. For the first time in my life, I've got structure and I'm surrounded by people who support me."

Jack, formerly on the Young People's Project, now Facilities Assistant at Calderstones

- A total of 7,469 adults and children have taken part in more than 30,000 visitor experiences at Calderstones.
- 581 tickets were sold to the first ever Gravity Festival - 59% of ticket bookers were new to The Reader. Programme highlights included events with Jimmy McGovern, Maxine Peake and authors Erwin James and Pragya Agarwal.
- A total of 13 weekly Shared Reading groups are up and running in the Mansion House. Thanks to the addition of video screens and teleconferencing, people who couldn't previously attend in-person groups are also able to take part.
- People attending Shared Reading groups at Calderstones agree that 'This activity makes me feel better' (98%) and 'It helps me to connect with others in a deeper way' (89%).
- Since August 2021, the poems and stories brought to life by the Trails & Tales digital park map have been accessed by visitors on over 3,000 unique devices.
- Growth in attendees to our monthly 'Make' craft sessions have grown in popularity, with attendance rising from 4 per session to 47.
- Volunteer retention has remained high at 75%, with 155 volunteers overall.
- 80% of Calderstones volunteers originally recruited in 2019 are active and remain engaged despite the challenges faced by the pandemic.
- A partnership with Hope University has seen 21 international students take up placements at the Mansion House, facilitating intergenerational exchange and supporting students to become familiar with their community.
- Set up of a new young people's employment initiative for those aged 18-25 facing barriers and / or NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) or at risk of being NEET. 100% of young people on the project said that the 'feel more confident about interacting with people at work and in daily life' as a result.
- Work is ongoing to diversify our volunteer base as part of our wider Equity, Diversity and Inclusion strategy.
- Successful partnerships with local organisations have helped us to deepen our engagement with communities in need of support, such as men in recovery from addiction (Vitality Homes), young adults facing barriers (Strawberry Fields) and women out of employment (Include-IT).

31 respondents, census Dec 2020

"The murkiness as we exist alongside each other calls us forward. I don't want to forget that I am here; at any given moment we are, each of us, next to any other capable of both the best and the worst our democracy has to offer."

From Just Us: An American Conversation by Claudia Rankine

3. Being a strong, learning organisation

- As part of our continued commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, we established Equalities Networks this year. In response to employee suggestions, networks were launched for staff from ethnic minority backgrounds, staff who identify as neuro diverse, LGBTQIA+ staff and staff with chronic illnesses or disabilities, as well as a group focused on discussing gender.
- We appointed journalist Tomiwa Owalade as a literature and race advisor to support our EDI priorities this year and were pleased to have both him and Rebekah Del Sol in conversation at Think Day to discuss learnings from our Just Us project
- At the beginning of the year, we were still making use of the furlough scheme in our social enterprise arm. The scheme allowed us to retain good staff and respond flexibly to the different stages of the pandemic, protecting the income the social enterprises generate for our charitable activities.
- We emerged from the pandemic an even more flexible organisation. Hybrid working is now the norm for many of our staff whose role does not require them to be site based, allowing us to give them more flexibility and autonomy. We continue to have a proportion of the workforce who work completely remotely and have worked hard to ensure they feel connected to each other and the organisation. We are now operating a remote first policy when it comes to meetings.
- Following a period of consultation with staff, we have clearly articulated our Employee Value Proposition – The Reader Reward Package. As part of that work, we've introduced a holiday buy and sell scheme for staff, a more competitive salary scale and internal policies and processes that provide more consistency and transparency when it comes to setting salaries.
- We strengthened our safeguarding processes this year and have increased resilience across the organisation by training and involving more of our senior leadership team in day-to-day safeguarding concerns on site and across our Shared Reading services.
- We continued to make use of the Office Vibe employee engagement platform, an important tool to ensure we were alert and responsive to the employee experience during the period of ongoing change 2021/22 brought with it.
- Thanks to funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, we have taken the first steps to improve our organisational resilience by embedding our literary heritage, and the rich heritage of the Mansion House into a variety of organisational activities. We started by making heritage a mandatory part of our induction for site-based staff, and we devoted a day of our organisational Think Day to talking about and learning about our heritage.
- We established a Volunteer Experience Group to ensure we are providing a consistent volunteer experience for all regardless of role and location.
- In data gathered as part of our Feedback Week survey, our volunteers told us that being part of The Reader has:

  90% – 'Given me a sense of achievement'
  87% – 'Helped me feel more connected to other people'
  85% – 'Given me a sense of purpose'
  82% – 'Improved my wellbeing'

  "I feel a real sense of achievement and it gives me confidence."

  "I enjoy meeting people, making friends and feeling useful."

Plans for future periods
During 21/22 The Reader embarked on a strategic planning round to start developing our new long term strategy. This involved:

- Expert external consultancy on wider trend and sector analysis
- A series of facilitated Board sessions and workshops with staff
- Several sessions with a range of volunteers involved in different aspects of our work. We were grateful for all the input received, demonstrating again our volunteers' commitment to the Reader's work.

In parallel the Directors and executive team for the Community Interest Company have been undertaking a similar exercise to develop our enterprise business model and set targets for its future.

The development of a new ten year strategy, entitled 'Inns on Roads' was led by the Founder and developed as a key part of her succession planning. This strategy provides a fresh articulation of The Reader's purpose and sets out three strategic goals for the future:

1) Opening the treasure house of great literature for everyone
2) Develop Shared Reading in places where it's most needed
3) Understand and talk about the change literature and Shared Reading can make in the world

As we look ahead to FY22/23, it's clear that due to Covid, continued flexibility and adaptability will be needed – life has not returned to normal for many of our partners, volunteers and participants. Our priorities, set out in our one year transitional business plan for the year include:

- Continue to rebuild the network of Shared Reading activities for adults. We will prioritise in-person groups where possible but will maintain a hybrid delivery model because we know digital sessions enable us to reach new people and to adapt if and when public health situation requires.
- Continue to collaborate with partners who can help us reach a diverse range of participants who will benefit the most from our services.
- Consult with library services on how we can scale Shared Reading in services most effectively and sustainably
- Continue to provide wonderful reading experiences for children and young people at The Storybarn and through Shared Reading projects with looked after children and families experiencing disadvantage.
- Enhance our volunteer experience through strengthening recruitment and increasing engagement with our volunteer support programme, working closely with volunteers to ensure we are listening and responding to their needs.
- Continue to develop our publications, including The Reader Magazine and Podcast to attract new audiences, support our volunteers and gather better insight and feedback on them.
- Launch a new Teaching Associate Pathway to provide staff and volunteers with a way to improve and strengthen their literary skills so they can deliver Shared Reading training and support to others.
- Launch our Bookshelf theme for the year - Light and Darkness - which will underpin our programme, Bookshelf and reading experiences across the movement during the year.
- Continue to re-establish Calderstones as a flagship North West cultural attraction, with the aim of delivering ambitious programming based on the Bookshelf and building creative partnerships and a well-supported network of volunteers.
- Continue to develop our young person's employment project at Calderstones, where we offer paid roles and work experience placements to young people facing disadvantage.
- Accelerate our 'Heritage at Calderstones' programme through a new 2-year project "Making Meaning at Calderstones", supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Launch a new digital roadmap to ensure we continue our digital transformation programme, embedding our new platforms and using data effectively
- Continue our 'Just Us' project, using the Shared Reading model to open conversations about race and racism, as part of our wider Equity, Diversity and Inclusion plan which has a priority focus on increasing the racial diversity of our staff and volunteers.

Financial review

The total income in 2021/22 was £4,064,045, an increase from £3,646,527 in 2020/21 brought about by a strong revival of our activities at Calderstones after the easing of Coronavirus restrictions.

The net deficit ("net expenditure") for the year is £133,447. This is inclusive of £265,513 depreciation costs incurred by the charity for which funds are held in reserves. These depreciation costs relate to the Storybarn, Mansion House and grant funded fixtures, and an associated transfer from restricted and designated funds has been applied. Following the fund transfers relating to depreciation, we arrive at a net surplus on charitable activities of £132,066 inclusive of a donation in the sum of £124,829 from Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company. The net movement on free reserves after other designated fund movements is £78,422.

Principal income sources

During 2021/22 The Reader Organisation's income was split across the following sources:

- 28% grants and donations for core activities
- 41% grant and commissioned delivery of Shared Reading (our principal charitable activity) and training of individuals to undertake Shared Reading
- 29% trading income from our subsidiary, Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company
- 2% event income (principally from the Storybarn)
- <1% Investment income

Reserves

The Reserves now stand at £6,529,718.

Reserves include £5,030,753 of restricted funds relating to Calderstones Mansion House which is reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year and will transfer to a designated fund upon satisfaction of restrictions within the grants.

The Group unrestricted funds total £1,498,965. This includes £656,246 of designated funds. The remaining £842,719 general unrestricted funds represents our free reserves.

Designated funds include:

- £173,663 that represents expenditure on the Storybarn building which is being released over a 10-year period (the useful economic life of the refurbishments undertaken within the building)
- £85,583 of designated funds that represents expenditure on the Mansion House building which is being released over 50 years (the useful economic life of the refurbishments undertaken within the building)
- £32,175 grant funded fixtures which is being released over a 3-year period (the useful economic life of the capitalised fixtures)
- £179,010 Mansion House support fund for investment in the facilities infrastructure that underpins our charitable work
- £86,000 Personnel investment fund which represents an investment for the future, aligning our workforce planning to strategic plans
- £57,801 IT re-structure and infrastructure fund to invest in the Charity's technology capabilities
- £42,014 Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund, a provision for future major repairs to the building

Reserves policy

The charity's reserves policy is to build up unrestricted reserves sufficient to enable the charity's core running costs to be continued for a period of three months, but where possible six months, in the event of regular funding becoming unobtainable. Three months core running costs equates to around £543,830. At the end of financial year 2021/22 the level of unrestricted, undesignated reserves amounts to £842,719, 5 months core running costs.

Public Benefit

The majority of activities provided by The Reader are funded by third parties, public sector bodies but additionally, from charitable trusts and partner organisations. There is an annual programme of activities, with some activities carrying a charge, however the majority of the programme, both nationally and at Calderstones, is free at the point of entry. The trustees have had due regard to the guidance published by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Funders and Commissioners
Arts Council England
Barton Moss Secure Care Centre
BDB Pitmans Charitable Trust
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
Cheltenham Festivals
Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group
Children In Need
City Bridge Trust
Conwy Libraries
Doncaster Public Health
Dorset County Council Library Service
Eleanor Rathbone Charitable Trust
Elizabeth L Rathbone Charitable Trust
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
Forward Arts
Garfield Weston Foundation
Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust
Hackney Libraries
Hammersmith and Fulham Libraries
Haringey Libraries
Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service
Ideas Store Tower Hamlets
Jewish Care
King's College London
Knowsley Clinical Commissioning Group
Liverpool Charity and Voluntary Services
Liverpool City Council
Mayoral Inclusive Growth Fund
Mercers The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington
Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust
Mo Siewcharran Memorial Fund
NHS Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group
NHS Wigan Borough Clinical Commissioning Group
Notting Hill Genesis
Players of People's Postcode Lottery
Public Health Agency Northern Ireland
Q Charitable Trust
Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospital Trust
Sefton Council
Somerset County Council
St Giles
St John's Waterloo
St Monica Trust Community Impact
Steve Morgan Foundation
Steve Morgan Foundation/DCMS Community Match Challenge
Suffolk Community Foundation
The Evan Cornish Foundation
The Granada Foundation
The Limbourne Trust
The Mercers' Company (The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington)
The National Lottery Heritage Fund
The National Trust
Tudor Trust
Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Wigan Clinical Commissioning Group
Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council
Woodchurch High School

Investment Power and Policy
Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the charity has the power to invest in any lawful way the trustees wish, after having obtained such advice from a financial expert as the trustees consider necessary having regard to the suitability of investments and the need for diversification. All reserves are held in deposit accounts and no investments were made during the year.

Risk Review
The Reader is committed to sound business practice and the embedding of risk management into the organisation's culture. Both the Reader and the Calderstones Mansion House CIC have risk registers that are used to gain a comprehensive view of the work of the organisations, and reveals strengths and opportunities as well as weaknesses. Risk assessments involve staff from across the organisation and the formal risk registers are reviewed by the Audit Committee at each meeting, with high level risks being reviewed by the Board. The register details the steps and procedures in place to mitigate the risks.

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Structure, governance and management

The Reader Organisation is a registered charity and also a company limited by guarantee. It is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association that were updated and adopted on the 13th November 2017.

The charity is governed by a Board of Trustees which must be made up of between three and twelve individuals. The board meets four times a year.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair)	
Ms R Hawley MBE	(Retired 22 November 2021)
Mr H Biddell	
Dr R M Hussey CB,OBE,DL	
Mr P L Davies	
Mr P K Sood	
Mrs S Fletcher	
Dr J Hamilton	(Appointed 17 May 2021)
Dr H Willows	(Appointed 17 May 2021)
Mr O Alake	(Appointed 17 May 2021)
Mr NI Atkinson	(Appointed 17 May 2021)

The company secretary is Jennifer Martin.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute the sum not exceeding £10 in the event of a winding up.

Trustees Recruitment, Induction and Training

When a trustee vacancy arises a recruitment process including advertisement, application and interview as necessary is overseen by the nominations committee in line with good practice guidance. The Reader has designed a comprehensive induction for new Trustees that includes but is not limited to:

- A briefing from the Chair
- Meeting with other Trustees
- Meeting with each of the Directors' Group
- Shared Reading with Directors' Group
- Meeting as many Reader staff as possible at the first opportunity

This programme of meetings is accompanied by an induction pack that includes useful papers such as:

- The Reader's Business Plan
- Copies of previous Board minutes
- The Reader's Memorandum and Articles of Association
- Charity Commission guidance 'Being a Trustee' and 'The Essential Trustee: What you need to know'
- A welcome letter from the Chair
- Trustee role description
- Latest annual report and final accounts
- Vision, mission and key facts
- Information on conflict of interests

A Committee structure is in place to support the Trustees in ensuring good governance. During the financial year there have been two Committees in operation: (i) the Audit Committee, which oversees governance and risk (ii) the Nominations Committee which oversees Trustee appointments.

The Calderstones Mansion House CIC has its own Board of 7 Directors. There are four members of The Reader Board who sit on the Calderstones CIC Board of Directors. Minutes of the CIC Board are submitted to The Reader Board as parent company. The Audit Committee oversees the work of Calderstones Mansion House CIC as well as The Reader.

The Trustees have appointed a Director to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity.

Senior Staff Remuneration
The Reader pays salaries according to a salary band system. Banding is based on the responsibilities attached to roles. One member of staff received remuneration over £60,000 in the financial year.

Staff and Volunteers
The trustees acknowledge the commitment and dedication of the charity's staff and volunteers which has been critical to the success of the organisation over the course of the year. Without the generosity of these people, who regularly go above and beyond what is asked of them, The Reader would not have reached as many people or helped change as many lives.

Auditor
At the Annual General Meeting in November 2016 it was agreed that a tender exercise should be undertaken for the appointment of Auditors to ensure value for money was being achieved for the Charity. This resulted in McLintocks (now Xeinadin Audit Limited) being appointed by special resolution of the Board of Directors in May 2017. The Board undertook a further tender exercise in 2021 which resulted in McLintocks (now Xeinadin Audit Limited) being re-appointed at the meeting in September 2021 for a three year period with review by the Audit Committee each year and option to extend to a five year period.

Disclosure of information to auditor
Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

The Trustees' report report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

A S Marsland.

Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair)

Dated: 12 September 2022

THE READER ORGANISATION

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' REPORT RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

The trustees, who are also the directors of The Reader Organisation for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company Law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;

- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

THE READER ORGANISATION

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF THE READER ORGANISATION

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Reader Organisation (the 'charity') and it's subsidiary for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the consolidated statement of financial activities, the consolidated and charity balance sheet, the consolidated statement of cash flows and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group and charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2022 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' report use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF THE READER ORGANISATION

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' report report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the Trustees' report report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the Trustees' report report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate and proper accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the Trustees' report report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of Trustees' report responsibilities, the trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group and charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with the Acts and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the group through discussions with trustees and other management, and from our knowledge and experience of charity sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the group, including the Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2011, data protection, anti-bribery, employment, food hygiene and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management team and inspecting legal correspondence; and identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the group's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management team as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- reviewing correspondence with HMRC and relevant regulators.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF THE READER ORGANISATION

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and to the regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company, the charitable company's members as a body,and the charitable company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Helen Furlong FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Xeinadin Audit Limited

20 September 2022

Accountants
Statutory Auditor

2 Hilliards Court
Chester Business Park
Chester
Cheshire
CH4 9QP

THE READER ORGANISATION

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	3	1,152,633	-	1,152,633	1,079,948	188,100	1,268,048
Charitable activities	4	847,779	901,618	1,749,397	677,646	1,216,918	1,894,564
Other trading activities	5	1,161,356	-	1,161,356	483,173	-	483,173
Investments	6	659	-	659	742	-	742
Total income		3,162,427	901,618	4,064,045	2,241,509	1,405,018	3,646,527
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	7	995,118	-	995,118	582,689	-	582,689
Charitable activities	8	2,300,756	901,618	3,202,374	1,515,934	1,368,010	2,883,944
Total resources expended		3,295,874	901,618	4,197,492	2,098,623	1,368,010	3,466,633
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		(133,447)	-	(133,447)	142,886	37,008	179,894
Gross transfers between funds		204,807	(204,807)	-	48,353	(48,353)	-
Net income/(expenditure) for the year/ Net movement in funds		71,360	(204,807)	(133,447)	191,239	(11,345)	179,894
Fund balances at 1 April 2021		1,427,605	5,235,560	6,663,165	1,236,366	5,246,905	6,483,271
Fund balances at 31 March 2022		1,498,965	5,030,753	6,529,718	1,427,605	5,235,560	6,663,165

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

THE READER ORGANISATION

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £	2021 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		5,338,789		5,595,561
Current assets					
Stocks	15	22,048		17,156	
Debtors	16	466,171		278,060	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,688,965		2,507,103	
		2,177,184		2,802,319	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	(986,255)		(1,734,715)	
Net current assets			1,190,929		1,067,604
Total assets less current liabilities			6,529,718		6,663,165
Income funds					
Restricted funds	22		5,030,753		5,235,560
Unrestricted funds	24		1,498,965		1,427,605
			6,529,718		6,663,165

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 12 September 2022

A. S. Marsland

Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair)
Trustee

Company Registration No. 06607389

THE READER ORGANISATION

CHARITY BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £	2021 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		5,338,789		5,595,561
Investments	14		1		1
			5,338,790		5,595,562
Current assets					
Debtors falling due within one year	17	663,937		332,921	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,384,099		2,409,078	
		2,048,036		2,741,999	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	19	(857,108)		(1,674,396)	
Net current assets			1,190,928		1,067,603
Total assets less current liabilities			6,529,718		6,486,757
Income funds					
Restricted funds	22		5,030,753		5,235,560
Unrestricted funds	25		1,498,965		1,427,605
			6,529,718		6,663,165

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 12 September 2022

A S. Marsland

Mrs A S Marsland MBE (Chair)
Trustee

Company Registration No. 06607389

THE READER ORGANISATION

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Notes	2022 £	£	2021 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	31		(794,407)		638,998
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(29,818)		(288,717)	
Proceeds on disposal of tangible fixed assets		5,428		-	
Interest received		659		742	
Net cash used in investing activities			(23,731)		(287,975)
Financing activities					
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents			(818,138)		351,023
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			2,507,103		2,156,080
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			1,688,965		2,507,103

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Reader Organisation is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is The Mansion House, Calderstones Park, Liverpool, Merseyside, L18 3JB.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's [governing document], the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended), FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

The trustees have reviewed the principle risks and uncertainties as a result of the covid-19 pandemic on the group. Although the impact of the covid-19 pandemic could well have a medium term effect, the trustees are confident that the group has adequate resources and support to continue as a going concern in the long term.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the accounts.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Voluntary income include donations which are accounted for as received by the charity.

These items are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability. Such income is only deferred when:

- The donor specifies that the grant or donation must only be used in future accounting years; or
- The donor has imposed conditions which must be met before the charity has unconditional settlement.

Investment income relates to bank interest receivable.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

Income from charitable activities includes income received under contract or where entitlement to grant funding is subject to specific performance conditions and is recognised as earned as the related goods or services are provided. Grant income included within this category provides funding to advance the education of the public in reading and the appreciation of literature.

Grants received in advance of the period in which the funder requires the expenditure to be applied will be reflected in deferred income within the balance sheet.

Income from the trading subsidiary turnover represents amounts received and receivable for goods supplied (excluding value added tax an voluntary gratuities left by customers for the benefit of employees) and is recognised at the point of sale.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred.

Charitable activities expenditure includes both direct costs and support costs relating to these activities.

Governance costs include those incurred in the governance of the charity and its assets and are primarily associated with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Leasehold improvements	Over a period of 10 years. Mansion house refurbishment over 50 years
Fixtures and fittings	Over a period of 3 years. Leasehold fit out over 10 years
Computers	Over a period of 3 years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

All assets costing more than £750 are capitalised at cost.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.7 Fixed asset investments

Fixed asset investments are initially measured at transaction price excluding transaction costs, and are subsequently measured at fair value at each reporting date. Changes in fair value are recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year. Transaction costs are expensed as incurred.

A subsidiary is an entity controlled by the charity. Control is the power to govern the financial and operating policies of the entity so as to obtain benefits from its activities.

1.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.9 Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value, after making due allowance for obsolete and slow moving items.

Net realisable value is the estimated selling price less all estimated costs of completion and costs to be incurred in marketing, selling and distribution.

1.10 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.11 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.12 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.13 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

1.14 Consolidation

The group financial statements consolidated the results of The Reader Organisation and its subsidiary undertaking, Calderstones Mansion House CIC, on a line buy line basis.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2022	**2022**	2021	2021	2021
	£	**£**	£	£	£
Donations and gifts	28,940	28,940	16,592	180	16,772
Grants receivable for core activities	1,123,693	1,123,693	1,063,356	-	1,063,356
Grants receivable for capital projects	-	-	-	187,920	187,920
	1,152,633	1,152,633	1,079,948	188,100	1,268,048

	Unrestricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2022	**2022**	2021	2021	2021
	£	**£**	£	£	£
Grants receivable for core activities					
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	25,933	25,933	-	-	-
Arts Council England National Portfolio Office	178,220	178,220	178,200	-	178,200
People's Postcode Lottery	879,072	879,072	625,840	-	625,840
CJRS grant	468	468	257,853	-	257,853
Tudor Trust	40,000	40,000	1,443	-	1,443
	1,123,693	1,123,693	1,063,336	-	1,063,336

4 Charitable activities

	Shared reading 2022	Storybarn 2022	Total 2022	Shared reading 2021	Storybarn 2021	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Commissions & Training	751,144	-	751,144	670,453	-	670,453
Grants	901,618	-	901,618	1,216,918	-	1,216,918
Events income	20,682	75,953	96,635	952	6,241	7,193
	1,673,444	75,953	1,749,397	1,888,323	6,241	1,894,564
Analysis by fund						
Unrestricted funds	771,826	75,953	847,779	671,405	6,241	677,646
Restricted funds	901,618	-	901,618	1,216,918	-	1,216,918
	1,673,444	75,953	1,749,397	1,888,323	6,241	1,894,564
Grants related to charitable activities						
The Garfield Weston Foundation	143,776	-	143,776	-	-	-
Knowsley CCG	17,729	-	17,729	17,617	-	17,617
National Lottery Community Fund	48,635	-	48,635	247,326	-	247,326
National Lottery Fund Wales	-	-	-	56,811	-	56,811
Age UK Bristol Ageing Better	-	-	-	14,357	-	14,357
City Bridge	23,540	-	23,540	6,050	-	6,050
BBC Children In Need	29,915	-	29,915	39,878	-	39,878
Esmee Fairbarn Foundation	51,863	-	51,863	51,863	-	51,863
Steve Morgan Foundation and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport	290,050	-	290,050	462,300	-	462,300
Lottery Coronavirus Community Support Fund	-	-	-	34,554	-	34,554
Somerset County Council	41,586	-	41,586	9,048	-	9,048
Steve Morgan Foundation	137,953	-	137,953	140,729	-	140,729
Prince of Wales Trust	-	-	-	47,290	-	47,290
The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington	19,104	-	19,104	21,543	-	21,543
Others	97,467	-	97,467	67,552	-	67,552
	901,618	-	901,618	1,216,918	-	1,216,918

5 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2022	2021
	£	£
Cafe,ice-cream parlour and other income	1,161,356	483,173

6 Investments

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2022	2021
	£	£
Interest receivable	659	742

7 Raising funds

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2022	2021
	£	£
Trading costs		
Operating costs	514,098	248,577
Other staff costs	2,233	287
Staff costs	478,787	333,825
Trading costs	995,118	582,689

8 Charitable activities

	Shared reading 2022	Storybarn 2022	Total 2022	Shared reading 2021	Storybarn 2021	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	1,748,212	85,707	1,833,919	1,576,787	20,185	1,596,972
Depreciation and impairment	-	60,706	60,706	-	44,528	44,528
Other expenditure	434,683	22,225	456,908	537,112	52	537,164
	2,182,895	168,638	2,351,533	2,113,899	64,765	2,178,664
Share of support costs (see note 9)	804,871	33,536	838,407	683,801	2,259	686,060
Share of governance costs (see note 9)	12,097	337	12,434	19,157	63	19,220
	2,999,863	202,511	3,202,374	2,816,857	67,087	2,883,944
Analysis by fund						
Unrestricted funds	2,098,245	202,511	2,300,756	1,448,847	67,087	1,515,934
Restricted funds	901,618	-	901,618	1,368,010	-	1,368,010
	2,999,863	202,511	3,202,374	2,816,857	67,087	2,883,944

9 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2022	Support costs	Governance costs	2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	384,460	-	384,460	330,658	-	330,658
Depreciation	220,457	-	220,457	208,966	-	208,966
Other costs	233,490	-	233,490	146,436	-	146,436
Audit fees	-	9,000	9,000	-	9,000	9,000
Accountancy	-	3,000	3,000	-	10,220	10,220
Trustee expenses	-	434	434	-	-	-
	838,407	12,434	850,841	686,060	19,220	705,280
Analysed between						
Charitable activities	838,407	12,434	850,841	686,060	19,220	705,280

10 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2022 Number	2021 Number
Shared Reading	93	79
Support Services	13	12
Storybarn	10	13
Calderstones Mansion House CIC	35	30
Total	151	134

Employment costs	2022 £	2021 £
Wages and salaries	2,416,442	2,018,551
Social security costs	160,474	133,249
Other pension costs	120,250	109,655
	2,697,166	2,261,455

Remuneration of key management personnel

Total remuneration received during the year by key management personnel amounted to £354,457 (2021: £310,708).

Retirement benefit schemes

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the Charity in an independently administered fund.

The charge to the statement of financial activities in respect of defined contribution schemes was £120,250 (2021: £109,655).

There were outstanding contributions in respect of defined contribution schemes at 31 March 2022 of nil (2021: £NIL).

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000.

11 Trustees

None of the trustees received any remuneration during either the current or previous year, and trustees were reimbursed £435 for travelling expenses (2021: £NIL).

12 Calderstones Mansion House CIC

A summary of the results of the subsidiary is shown below:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Income	1,092,156	465,792
Expenditure	(1,092,156)	(462,306)
	-	3,486

Aggregate assets and liabilities

Current assets	348,999	134,345
Current liabilities	(348,998)	(134,344)
	1	1

13 Tangible fixed assets - Group and Company

	Leasehold improvements	Fixtures and fittings	Computers	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost				
At 1 April 2021	4,924,972	1,279,408	35,980	6,240,360
Additions	-	27,515	2,303	29,818
Disposals	(5,428)	-	-	(5,428)
At 31 March 2022	4,919,544	1,306,923	38,283	6,264,750
Depreciation and impairment				
At 1 April 2021	377,589	247,658	19,551	644,798
Depreciation charged in the year	133,290	138,528	9,345	281,163
At 31 March 2022	510,879	386,186	28,896	925,961
Carrying amount				
At 31 March 2022	4,408,665	920,737	9,387	5,338,789
At 31 March 2021	4,547,383	1,031,749	16,429	5,595,561

14 Fixed asset investments - Group undertakings

The charity owns the whole of the issued share capital of the following subsidary undertaking which is registered in England and has the same registered office as the charity.

Subsidiary	Principal activity
Calderstones Mansion House CIC	Restaurants and cafes

The carrying value of the investment in the financial statements is £1 (2020:£1).

15 Stocks - Group

	2022	2021
	£	£
Goods for resale	22,048	17,156

16 Debtors - Group

	2022	2021
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Trade debtors	83,596	21,076
Other debtors	238,390	194,784
Prepayments and accrued income	144,185	62,200
	466,171	278,060

17 Debtors - Charity

	2022	2021
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Trade debtors	62,561	8,858
Amounts owed by subsidiary undertakings	219,851	74,025
Other debtors	238,390	187,920
Prepayments and accrued income	143,135	62,118
	663,937	332,921

18 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year - Group

	Notes	2022	2021
		£	£
Other taxation and social security		28,060	1,085
Deferred income	20	711,376	1,111,043
Trade creditors		191,034	223,311
Other creditors		2,664	360,656
Accruals		53,121	38,621
		986,255	1,734,716

19 Creditors:amounts falling due within one year - Charity

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
Deferred income	21	653,846	1,085,090
Trade creditors		161,837	201,513
Other creditors		1,721	359,196
Accruals and deferred income		39,704	28,597
		857,108	1,674,396

20 Deferred income - Group

	2022 £	2021 £
Other deferred income	711,376	1,111,043

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Balance at 1 April 2021	1,111,043	984,832
Amounts received in year	1,674,109	2,242,887
Amounts credited to statement of financial activities	(2,073,777)	(2,116,676)
Balance at 31 March 2022	711,376	1,111,043

21 Deferred income - Charity

	2022 £	2021 £
Other deferred income	653,846	1,085,090

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Balance at 1 April 2021	1,085,090	984,832
Amounts received in year	1,602,964	2,216,934
Amounts credited to statement of financial activities	(2,035,086)	(2,116,676)
Balance at 31 March 2022	652,968	1,085,090

22 Restricted funds - Group & Charity

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2020	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Shared Reading	-	1,217,098	(1,168,745)	(48,353)	-	901,618	(901,618)	-	-
Calderstones Mansion House	5,246,905	187,920	(199,265)	-	5,235,560	-	-	(204,807)	5,030,753
	5,246,904	1,405,018	(1,368,010)	(48,353)	5,235,560	901,618	(901,618)	(204,807)	5,030,753

Shared Reading
Shared Reading includes our core work of delivering shared reading groups. This is funded through grants and commissions (please refer to notes 3 and 4 for further information).

Calderstones Mansion House
The Calderstones Mansion House is the charities headquarters based at our site within Calderstones Park. Grants have been received from Heritage Lottery, Liverpool City Council, Tudor Trust and other funders to refurbish the building. The money for this project has been split between restricted funds and a designated unrestricted fund depending on the nature of the income received. Following the completion of the building works and satisfaction of the restrictions within the grants, the restricted fund will be transferred to the designated unrestricted fund where it will be reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year.

23 Related party transactions

No guarantees have been given or received.

J Davis (Founder and Director) is a director for the Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company and does not receive any additional remuneration for this role.

S Fletcher is a director for the Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company and resigned from her position as Chief Operating Officer and Director of Finance in May 2021. During her time as Chief Operating Officer and Director of Finance Sarah Fletcher received no additional remuneration for her role as a Director of Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company.

24 Unresticted funds - Group

The unrestricted funds of the charity also include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2020	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General unrestricted	726,718	2,241,509	(2,052,440)	(151,490)	764,297	3,016,584	(3,142,969)	204,807	842,719
Storybarn Building	262,719	-	(44,528)	-	218,191	-	(44,528)	-	173,663
Calderstones Mansion House	246,929	-	(1,655)	(159,691)	85,583	-	-	-	85,583
Grant funded fixtures	-	-	-	48,353	48,353	-	(16,178)	-	32,175
Mansion House support fund	-	-	-	54,181	54,181	124,829	-	-	179,010
Personnel investment fund	-	-	-	143,000	143,000	-	(57,000)	-	86,000
IT re-structure and infrastructure fund	-	-	-	93,000	93,000	-	(35,199)	-	57,801
Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund	-	-	-	21,000	21,000	21,014	-	-	42,014
	1,236,366	2,241,509	(2,098,623)	48,353	1,427,605	3,162,427	(3,295,874)	204,807	1,498,965

24 Unresticted funds - Group **(Continued)**

Storybarn Building
The Storybarn represents the capital cost of the building. This fund will be reduced by the associated depreciation charge each year.

Calderstones Mansion House
The Calderstones Mansion House is the charities headquarters based at our site within Calderstones Park. Grants have been received from Heritage Lottery, Liverpool City Council, Tudor Trust and other funders to refurbish the building. The money for this project has been split between restricted funds and a designated unrestricted fund depending on the nature of the income received. Following the completion of the building works and satisfaction of the restrictions within the grants, the restricted fund will be transferred to the designated unrestricted fund where it will be reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year.

Mansion House support fund
This represents a re-investment of a charitable donation from the Charity's subsidiary, Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company, towards the site and operations that underpin our charitable work.

Personnel investment fund
The Trustees have designated a Personnel Investment Fund to facilitate growth by aligning workforce planning to strategic plans. This fund will enable the organisation to invest in the future through the implementation of a new reward and recognition programme for staff and enablement of succession planning.

IT re-structure and infrastructure fund
The Board of Trustees recognise technology's strategic importance as a critical component of the Charity's activities and have designated an IT re-structure and infrastructure fund to invest in The Charity's technology capabilities.

Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund
The sinking fund is set up to provide a provision for future major repairs to Calderstones Mansion House. The agreed amount to be transferred each year from the general reserves is £21,000.

25 Unresticted funds - Charity

The unrestricted funds of the charity also include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds					Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2020	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Revaluations, gains and losses	Balance at 1 April 2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Revaluations, gains and losses	Balance at 31 March 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General unrestricted	730,204	1,612,080	(1,426,497)	(151,490)		764,297	3,016,584	(3,142,969)	204,807		842,719
Storybarn Building	262,719	-	(44,528)	-	-	218,191	-	(44,528)	-	-	173,663
Calderstones Mansion House	246,929	-	(1,655)	(159,691)		85,583	-	-	-		85,583
Grant funded fixtures	-	-	-	48,353	-	48,353	-	(16,178)	-	-	32,175
Mansion House support fund	-	-	-	54,181	-	54,181	124,829	-	-	-	179,010
Personnel investment fund	-	-	-	143,000	-	143,000	-	(57,000)	-	-	86,000
IT re-structure and infrastructure fund	-	-	-	93,000	-	93,000	-	(35,199)	-	-	57,801
Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund	-	-	-	21,000	-	21,000	21,014	-	-	-	42,014
	1,239,852	1,612,080	(1,472,680)	48,353		1,427,605	3,162,427	(3,295,874)	204,807	-	1,498,965

25 Unresticted funds - Charity **(Continued)**

Storybarn Building
The Storybarn represents the capital cost of the building. This fund will be reduced by the associated depreciation charge each year.

Calderstones Mansion House
The Calderstones Mansion House is the charities headquarters based at our site within Calderstones Park. Grants have been received from Heritage Lottery, Liverpool City Council, Tudor Trust and other funders to refurbish the building. The money for this project has been split between restricted funds and a designated unrestricted fund depending on the nature of the income received. Following the completion of the building works and satisfaction of the restrictions within the grants, the restricted fund will be transferred to the designated unrestricted fund where it will be reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year.

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Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund
The sinking fund is set up to provide a provision for future major repairs to Calderstones Mansion House. The agreed amount to be transferred each year from the general reserves is £21,000.

26 Company limited by guarantee

The charitable company is limited by guarantee and has no share capital. Every member of the charity undertakes to contribute to the assets of the charity in the event of being wound up while he or she is a member or within one year of ceasing to be a member for debts and liabilities of the charity contracted before he or she ceases to be a member, such amounts as may be required not exceeding £10.

27 Analysis of net assets between funds - Group

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2022 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	308,036	5,030,753	5,338,789	360,001	5,235,560	5,595,561
Current assets/(liabilities)	1,190,928	-	1,190,929	1,067,603	-	1,067,603
	1,498,964	5,030,753	6,529,718	1,427,604	5,235,560	6,663,164

28 Analysis of net assets between funds - Charity

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2022 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	308,036	5,030,753	5,338,789	360,001	5,235,560	5,595,561
Investments	1	-	1	1	-	1
Current assets/(liabilities)	1,190,928	-	1,190,928	1,067,603	1	1,067,603
	1,498,965	5,030,753	6,529,718	1,427,605	5,235,561	6,663,165

29 Operating lease commitments

At the reporting end date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Within one year	30,838	30,838
Between two and five years	113,764	117,961
In over five years	2,985,336	3,317,040
	3,129,938	3,465,839

30 Analysis of changes in net funds

The charity had no debt during the year.

31 Cash generated from operations

	2022 £	2021 £
(Deficit)/surpus for the year	(133,447)	179,894
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(659)	(742)
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	281,163	257,056
Movements in working capital:		
(Increase)/decrease in stocks	(4,892)	2,192
(Increase) in debtors	(188,111)	(64,076)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(348,794)	138,463
(Decrease)/increase in deferred income	(399,667)	126,211
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	(794,407)	638,998

THE READER ORGANISATION

England & Wales - Charity number 1126806

Accounts

Charity Registration No. 1126806 (England and Wales)

Charity Registration No. SC043054 (Scotland)

Company Registration No. 06607389 (England and Wales)

THE READER ORGANISATION

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

McLINTOCKS
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
AND BUSINESS ADVISORS

THE READER ORGANISATION

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Mrs A S Marsland (Chair) Ms R Hawley ME JP DL Mr H Biddell Dr R M Hussey Mr P L Davies Mr P K Sood Mrs Sarah Fletcher	(Appointed 14 September 2020)
Secretary	Ms J Martin	
Founder and Director **Chief Operating Officer** **Director of Finance**	Ms J Davis Ms A Horne Ms V Hopton	
Charity number (England and Wales)	1126806	
Charity number (Scotland)	SC043054	
Company number	06607389	
Registered office	The Mansion House Calderstones Park Liverpool Merseyside L18 3JB	
Auditor	McLintocks (NW) Limited 46 Hamilton Square Birkenhead Wirral Merseyside CH41 5AR	
Bankers	Santander UK Plc Bridle Road Bootle Merseyside L30 4GB	

THE READER ORGANISATION

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THE READER ORGANISATION

CHAIR'S STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Chair & Director's Statement

There is nothing
to do but learn and wait, return to work
on what remains. Seed will sprout in the scar. Though death is in the healing, it will heal.

From 'The Slip', Wendell Berry

The Reader's plans for the financial year 2020/21 were thrown into disarray as we – like everyone else – faced the enormous challenge of navigating a global pandemic emergency.

We began the year having already made the decision to suspend all in-person activity at our organizational headquarters, Calderstones, and across GB in March 2020. For the safety and wellbeing of the movement, Shared Reading groups and 1:1s were put on hold as we asked more than 1200 volunteers to temporarily stand down.

In April, as the chaos and uncertainty wrought by Covid-19 gained momentum, our ability to perform large strands of our work fell away. But as the words of the poem tell us, 'seed will sprout in the scar' and we soon found an urgency and impetus to innovate in order to respond to the three most pressing needs that were arising from communities; the need for food; wellbeing support and for social connection.

We reacted quickly to evolve our work where we could in order to meet these needs, and our Trustees approved a temporary change to our mission in response to the National Emergency.

Our Adapted Mission
We aim to help humans survive and live well by providing two services – food to keep body alive for those in most need, and literature for the spirit of all.

In the words of the early female unionists of the US, who recognised that life was not only about basic breadline necessities but also about the ineffable beauty of the world, 'give us bread but give us roses'.

For the duration of the emergency, we worked under the banner: Bread and Roses.

Bread
We secured emergency local funding to be able to use our kitchens at the Mansion House to produce frozen, nutritious soup and cooked meals for those who needed them in the Liverpool City Region.

From April to July, we cooked up over 4,000 portions of vegan soup which were distributed with the help of our partners at Crisis Merseyside, The Whitechapel Centre, L6 Community Association and Granby and Toxteth Trust, Woolton Food Bank, West Everton Community Centre, Torus Housing, South Liverpool Foodbank and Local Solutions Liverpool.

In December, the project relaunched to provide an extra 1,000 portions of Mansion House Lamb Scouse and vegan soup, bringing the total number of meals provided to over 5,000.

Each portion of soup or scouse went out into the world with information about our coronavirus support line, online Shared Reading services, and a piece of literature offering a message of unity, hope, and love.

Throughout this time of changing restrictions, our social enterprises at Calderstones continued to serve the local community when they could in recognition that simply being open was a helpful service for the public.

THE READER ORGANISATION

CHAIR'S STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Roses
The roses of life include human company and feeling connected as well as the enjoyment of literature, and that is what we worked on for all our group members, volunteers, volunteer Reader Leaders and staff.

We transformed the way we deliver Shared Reading wherever possible – using internet, telephone and social media. We reached people both inside and outside the movement in new ways, such as online volunteer support sessions to printed reading packs and radio programmes for prisons and Shared Reading over the phone.

Impact
It has been heartening to hear how, with and without our support, our fantastic volunteer base found new ways of keeping in touch with their group members and each other using Zoom, social media, email, WhatsApp and other means as they continued to read and be together.

And while groups continued at a distance, the inspiring accounts from more of our volunteers and staff members provided us with a picture of communities continuing to embrace Shared Reading in its new format, from care homes to libraries, with young readers and those trying it out for the first time, including...

The 93-year-old using Zoom to join her regular group; a bed-bound individual joining a Calderstones session online; a homeless individual reading over the phone from a hotel who told us: 'After the call I feel good, I'm thinking about the poem and that you phoned. There's no pressure and I get speak my mind – it helps.' And the occupational therapist who used Shared Reading to 'read with people at the end of their life and it made a big difference. It helped to create a calming atmosphere as well as maintain that bond with our patients – it was so meaningful.'

On behalf of the trustees, we would like to give thanks to all our wonderful volunteers, group members and colleagues who have worked so hard to continue to bring us through this difficult time.

We are also grateful to our core funders – Arts Council England, players of People's Postcode Lottery and The National Lottery Community Fund – who have supported us through the uncertainty. In 2020-21, we added the Steve Morgan Foundation to this list in recognition of a funding award from the Foundation and DCMS Community Match Challenge – part of government's £750m support package for charities .

Core funder support, along with that of a wide range of generous funders, supporters, partners, commissioners, customers and individual donors, has helped to reshape our activity in ways we'd never imagined in 2020 – approximately 35% of our original provision is now running in an alternative way and 50% of our volunteers remain active and engaged.

Finally, this year we engaged all our staff in open conversations about how we can strengthen our approach to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). Whilst inclusion is integral to our work, we know that we can do more to make our belief that Shared Reading can be for everyone a reality and to show how the power of Shared Reading can help build connections and understanding between people from different backgrounds. A stronger approach to EDI will underpin our next strategic plan (to be developed in 2021/22), with a priority focus on racial equality and anti-racism.

THE READER ORGANISATION

CHAIR'S STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

In 2021, our challenge now is to get ourselves on a strong footing so we can do more.

Like many charities we're concerned about participants who haven't been able to access our support during this time when we know that the pandemic has taken a toll on mental health and wellbeing, the effects of which will continue long after restrictions are lifted.

We know that there is much work to do if we are to rebuild the reading revolution and reach full capacity once again, but what is also certain and clear to us is the importance of our mission. As Toni Morisson writes:

This is precisely the time when artists go to work. There is no time for despair, no place for self-pity, no need for silence, no room for fear. We speak, we write, we do language. That is how civilizations heal.

A. D. Marsland

Jane Davis, Founder and Director

Anita Marsland, Chair of Trustees

Dated: 13 September 2021

THE READER ORGANISATION

TRUSTEES' REPORT REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT AND STRATEGIC REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

The trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document (Memorandum and Articles of Association), the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities

Objects of the charity

The charity's objects are to promote any charitable purposes for the benefit of citizens and inhabitants of the United Kingdom and other countries, in particular the advancement of education, the furtherance of health, the relief of poverty, distress and sickness, the promotion of social inclusion and furtherance of community especially through reading and literature based activities.

Our Vision

A world in which everyone has 'something real to carry home when day is done'.

Our Mission

The Reader is bringing about a reading revolution so that everyone can experience and enjoy great literature, which we believe is a tool for helping humans survive and to live well.

Everything we do – from our Shared Reading groups to our social enterprises, from our publications to The Storybarn at Calderstones – brings people together and books to life to make this happen.

For the duration of the pandemic, we adapted our mission as follows:

We aim to help humans survive and live well by providing two services – food to keep body alive for those in most need, and literature for the spirit of all.

In the words of the early female unionists of the US, who recognised that life was not only about basic breadline necessities but also about the ineffable beauty of the world, 'give us bread but give us roses'.

"Literary reading is reading at its most intense, moving, and imaginatively speculative. It is the best way to feel, imagine and think about life – your life."

From Reading, Philip Davis and Fiona Magee, 2020

Shared Reading and Great Literature: Needed More Than Ever
As we adapt to living with the new post-pandemic normal, literature's life-supporting benefits are needed more than ever. Great novels, poems and plays offer connection, comfort, wellness and meaning – all of which will help our society to heal.

Connecting with rich and complex literature gives us access to our deepest thoughts, emotions and experiences – it touches us and makes us say 'I never knew anyone but me felt that!'. For The Reader, this is where 'great' starts. A great book might be Anna Karenina or I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings, or Not Now Bernard or Millions.

We actively look for literature that ignites feeling, emotional recognition, and while recognizing that each individual will have their own centres of feeling, we seek out literature that will speak to the feelings of a range of people and help to meet the understanding of diverse people with diverse experience.

What Shared Reading Does
Peter's Reader Story
'I joined an online Shared Reading group via Zoom. It has become my one opening to the world. During the lockdown, I have had very limited contact with other human beings. You have no idea how valuable these online Friday sessions have been to me.'

People who took part in Shared Reading activities in 2020 told us that it...
'Makes me feel better' – 94%
'Gives me something different to think about' – 95%
'Helps me to connect with others in a different way' – 89%
'Has made me feel more connected to other people' – 89%

Our strategic goals for 2017 – 2022
Thanks to our volunteers, staff and supporters, we continued to make strong progress during 2020/21 despite the major challenges faced as a result of COVID. Inevitably we have made changes to the way we deliver our work. We anticipate that many new products developed in response to urgent needs will continue during 21/22.

Our three main ambitions remain;

- Grow Shared Reading so that great literature can help more people to survive and live well in their own communities.
- Successfully establish our organisational home – The Reader at Calderstones – as a new kind of community based on Shared Reading.
- Be a strong, learning organisation that is values-driven and a pioneering place to work, volunteer or participate.

[1] Feedback from our Community Survey, September 2020 – 351 individuals surveyed, response rate 84%

Strategic report

The description under the headings "Achievements and performance" and "Financial review" meet the company law requirements for the trustees to present a strategic report.

Achievements and performance

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

In 2020-21, we continued to make strong progress despite the major challenges faced as a result of COVID.

Highlight achievements are;

- Launch of The Reader at Home – a range of new digital products for adults as a fast response to the COVID situation.
- 5,000+ soups and hot meals provided with a poem to those in need.
- Produced and distributed a four-part anthology, specifically curated to provide comfort through testing times.
- Developed new digital products to provide an offer for children and their parents.
- Transferred as much activity from of our Shared Reading projects for Adults and Children online as possible.
- Increased the support available to our volunteers and improved our working practices to provide as much flexibility and support for our staff as possible.
- Produced and broadcast 16 programmes on the National Prison Radio Service.
- Launched and worked with partners to distribute our new 'Lifelines' activity pack for our group members without internet access including those in prisons. 25 editions have been produced so far.
- Launched our new Shared Reading on the phone service with a specific focus on homeless people in London (working in partnership with Cardboard Citizens) and isolated people living close to Calderstones.
- First edition of the relaunched Reader Magazine was released in March, hitting letterboxes just as the pandemic took hold, providing much needed pleasure and comfort. The second edition was published in September.
- Achieved Investors in Volunteers Kitemark in July.
- Piloted (and are now rolling out) an online version of our flagship training course (Read to Lead) and our training those Reading one-to-one with vulnerable children (A Little Aloud for Children).
- Led a piece of work with a consortium of primary care, VCSE and wider partners to complete a report looking at Social Prescribing in South Liverpool. Initial response has been positive with the CCG and the University of Liverpool showing interest in the recommendations, inviting further discussion with researchers within their National Institution Health Research social prescribing work. We are now in discussions with Capacity, LCVS and PSS regarding the longer term legacy of the work.
- Continued to develop International Development Partnership with Belgium's Het Lezerscollectief, working closely with Laserinengforen Denmark and with Leserne in Norway.
- Continued work on our digital transformation programme. Following the launch of the new public facing website in September 2019, there was a soft launch of the Online Community Hub (a new platform giving our volunteer access to a wide variety of resources and an easy way to claim expenses and report on their activities) in August, and work continues on the new CRM roll out.
- Our first ever People Strategy was finalised and launched setting out our key priorities for the next three years.
- Progress on our work towards the Creative Case for Diversity: continued focus on our Diversity action plan, recruited a cohort of staff Diversity and Inclusion Advocates, prioritised diversification of our Reader Library and held The Big Diversity and Inclusion Think Day for staff Nov 2020, with visiting speaker Ruth Ibegbuna. Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion – Belonging at The Reader – strategy to be

- Through funding from DCMS and the Steve Morgan Foundation we began piloting a menu of options for primary and secondary schools to create an embedded model of Shared Reading. This year we have engaged 446 primary and 114 secondary school pupils across the Liverpool area and we look forward to continuing and developing this work in 2021/22.
- Created a new outdoor area at the Storybarn that will enhance our offer for years to come.
- Developed and launched our own e-learning platform which will be used to improve the delivery of our online training and to provide a better experience for group members attending online Shared Reading groups
- Developed 'Tales and Trails' a new outdoor digital heritage experience for families
- Funded by the DCMS/Steve Morgan Foundation and working alongside partners such as the Liverpool City Council Care Leavers team, Kuumba Imani Centre/L8 and the Salvation Army at Strawberry Fields, we have started to pilot an exciting long-term project offering young people wide-ranging training and meaningful personal development, boosting employability. Three young people, referred from the Leaving Care team, have started their exciting employment journey at Calderstones.

2020-21 Operational highlights

1. Growing Shared Reading ...
'This is probably the most rewarding thing I've ever done. The connectedness you get with other human beings is quite incredible. Remarkable - just through one story or one poem.'

Volunteer Reader Leader

National Shared Reading
During the year

- Over 18,000 adults engaged with our new portfolio of Shared Reading activities in person and online – over 5,500 of these either volunteering or participating in a Shared Reading group or 1-to-1.
- We onboarded and trained 73 new volunteers despite the pandemic and 46 volunteers took on a new role to help deliver new activities.
- New online reading material developed to support people through the crisis has been accessed over 10,700 times.
- We tripled the number of practical and wellbeing support sessions we offered volunteers.
- Every week we sent reading activity packs out to 256 partners, including care homes and charities
- We developed 7 new products to keep adults reading together - including weekly readings on Facebook Live, new digital anthologies, audio and video readings and a series of radio programmes broadcast in prisons.
- 69 socially isolated people from across GB read with us over the phone every week.
- We developed our own e-learning platform allowing us to upgrade our online training experience, and host our online Shared Reading groups
- We piloted a new product for Care Home residents ready for wider roll out in 2021/22
- We launched The Reader Podcast - a regular, audible magazine to offer existing and new supporters a taste of what the Reading Revolution's all about.

'I remember one week we read a poem about a tree and it kind of triggered nature to me... it's inspired me to look at my surroundings a bit closer and really see the things I just took for granted and appreciate them more.'

Shared Reading Group Member

Feedback on our alternative provision during the year showed that

- 94% of participants surveyed reported that the activity they engaged in makes them feel better
- 95% of participants surveyed reported that the activity they engaged with gave them with something different to think about
- 89% reported that Shared Reading helped them feel more connected to other people.
- 72% of participants surveyed felt that our alternative provision was an important activity to help them during lockdown.

Our work in Criminal Justice

'There are so many times, when you're in custody, that you're just going through the motions almost like a zombie, just to make it to the next day. It's very easy to drift into that. I think what these poems do is bring you back to reality. It reminds you that after that period of incarceration - there is something else.'

Tassie, contributor, National Prison Radio

Through a collaboration with our PIPEs funder, and with funding from the Steve Morgan Foundation and DCMS Community Match Challenge – part of government's £750m support package for charities #CommunitiesCan, we were delighted to be able to produce and broadcast 16 programmes on National Prison Radio throughout the year.

Developed with Prison Radio Association, the programmes offered residents in 120 UK prisons a vital opportunity for meaningful connection and wellbeing support at a time when additional restrictions in place because of Covid were having a profound impact on the mental and physical wellbeing of many.

We also continued to reach participants in the Health and Justice Sector throughout the pandemic with a new reading activity pack that was distributed within all the settings we usually work in and did not rely on the use of digital solutions.

Growing Shared Reading

We are now supporting eight active International Partners, with a new partnership in Region Varmland, Sweden recently coming on line. In-person visits from our international partners were of course not possible this year. However, the move to online training and support has benefited our international audiences in terms of convenience. During the pandemic, our International Reader Leaders joined our UK Reader Leaders for online support sessions for the first time. There are new relationships in Sweden currently in the pipeline.

Our work with Children and Young People

As you will know, our children have frequently suffered trauma, neglect and sometimes abuse. This of course affects their ability to focus, their ability to trust and their ability to self calm and regulate. Reading Heroes has offered them all these things in bucketfuls and more. One particular young person has been out of school for some time, not being able to have his very complex needs met by even some of our more specialist provisions. This has, in turn, put pressure on his home life where his behaviour continues to challenge. He has responded so well to Reading Heroes and thoroughly enjoys his slot (as does his nan).

If only just this child was affected, it makes the service successful in impacting on the lives of very vulnerable young people. But there are so many more besides him and for all of them, I thank you whole heartedly for your kindness, consideration, time and patience. You are wonderful.

Virtual Schools Headteacher, Wirral Childrens and Young People Services

- We developed 6 new digital products to keep children reading and engaged during the pandemic including Storybarn Live on Facebook, Hijacked: digital schools offer, Online Birthday Parties, Books & Babies: weekly parent and child sessions for our First Page Partner families, Eerie Ears- an immersive reading experience available for download and Bedtime Reading via You Tube.
- Shared Reading with Looked After Children has translated brilliantly online and continues to engage vulnerable children. We have seen wider engagement from volunteers nation-wide with over 87 active pairings for reading via Zoom. Reading Heroes will continue to offer both online and in person reading to support ongoing engagement going forward.
- Our First Page Project has been challenging this year, with many partner organisations closing their doors due to Covid. We were delighted to maintain contact with many of our partners, sending out resource packs to support alternative delivery and we were delighted to welcome 17 new partners. We look forward to rebuilding and nurturing our partners connections over the coming year.

- We provided an outdoor Christmas activity for children and families through Santa Post, a story based adventure in the park, offered in partnership with a leading independent publisher, Walker Books, that attracted over 900 visitors to the site during December 2020.
- In partnership with Calderstones School we are transforming a container in our courtyard into a creative space for reading activities for teenagers.
- The Storybarn became the North West Partner for Cheltenham Literary Festivals' programme Reading Teachers = Reading Pupils. This programme nurtures reading for pleasure for our local teaching community and we are excited to continue this relationship into the 21/22 academic year.

Feedback on our work with Children and Young People during the year showed that:

- 80% of teachers participating in our schools project strongly agree that Shared Reading encourages students to share thoughts and ideas.
- 85% of young people that we read with on our Reading Heros project showed significant improvements in confidence and self-esteem.
- After engaging with our Santa Post trail, 87% of respondents agreed with the statement 'This visit made me want to spend more time sharing stories with my child(ren)'.
- 100% of partner staff and volunteers participating in training for our First Page project reported that they feel more confident choosing stories and poems to read.

2. Successfully establishing The Reader at Calderstones

'Although not on official shielding list I have a chronic health problem which requires me to take immunosuppressant medication. I was virtually housebound for 5 months and remain isolated to some degree. The Reader has been a lifeline and I am very grateful to have been able to lead and participate in Shared Reading and Knit and Natter activities.'

A Calderstones Volunteer

The Calderstones programme this year has included a range of outdoors, phone, print and online activity – from a community common place book and digital poetry park trails, to Shared Reading on Zoom and the Finding Connection volunteer-led telephone service

- These efforts, combined with our soup and poetry distribution across Liverpool City Region, have reached a total of 4,275 children and adults, providing 54,639* participant experiences (*figure includes 15% of total engaged in wider Reader at Home digital provision).
- Even in difficult circumstances, the Mansion House continued to be an important asset for the local community. In September, we welcomed new tenants, Our Liverpool - a Liverpool City Council initiative that provides educational classes to asylum seekers and refugees.
- Over 2,000 bookings made with an estimated 4,926 tickets sold.
- 95% of participants who took part in activities at Calderstones felt it improved their wellbeing with 54% reporting that it reduced their social isolation
- Co-creation and launch of a vibrant community programme which, before Covid, consisted of 40+ weekly activities: an expanded schedule of 23 weekly Shared Reading groups and 17 wider wellbeing activities – from gardening, heritage, nature, families and crafts.
- 80 volunteers remained active throughout the year despite circumstances. Volunteer welfare has been an immediate priority, with monthly calls and weekly wellbeing sessions
- Of Calderstones volunteer respondents (31 respondents, census Dec 2020), 90% reported that volunteering had improved their wellbeing, 93% reported an improved sense of achievement, 90% reported feeling more connected to others and 57% reported feeling more able to deal with difficult times.
- We're delighted to have been able to offer a number of employment opportunities at Calderstones and to have recruited new staff members from a diverse range of backgrounds. Greg, our Young Person Mentor said, 'I am excited to utilise every area of our site and to also engage each department so that the project holds real value across the organisation. As a team we can create real meaningful opportunities for young people in this city and create an inclusive nurturing environment for the foreseeable future.'

- Working around restrictions, volunteers and group members took part in several filming opportunities that helped to broaden support for Shared Reading and raise the profile of Calderstones, including films featured on BBC1 and ITV.
- Over 130 volunteers have been recruited and trained in a range of roles such as activity group leaders, welcome volunteers, heritage guides, gift shop assistants, library support and evaluators, putting local people at the heart of the visitor experience at the Mansion House.
- We completed planning for the April 2021 launch of The Reader Bookshelf - an annual programme of carefully curated literature to support all of our reading-based work and the wider Reading Revolution.
- Due to lockdown, we were unable to deliver our 'Big Days Out' outreach model with our ten identified partners but we've adapted our approach to provide new and novel ways of support.
- We have deepened and instigated new partner relationships – from CRISIS, to Everton in the Community, to Mersey Care NHS Life Rooms. Inspired by a telephone Shared Reading pilot with Cardboard Citizens, we were able to offer this service locally.
- We also co-curated weekly poetry-inspired 'Art for All' packs alongside Whitechapel homeless services, since shared with 85 families they support. For Sheltered Housing 'South Liverpool Homes', this has provided a gateway to further engagement – we've since held resident Shared Reading sessions using the literature included in the packs. This presents an embedded outreach offer we'd like to explore.

"If you don't understand, ask questions. If you're uncomfortable about asking questions, say you are uncomfortable about asking questions and then ask anyway. It's easy to tell when a question is coming from a good place. Then listen some more. Sometimes people just want to feel heard. Here's to possibilities of friendship and connection and understanding."

From Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

3. Being a strong, learning organisation

- We achieved the Investing in Volunteers Kitemark
- We undertook a restructure in two phases to streamline the organisation in response to Covid and to ensure we have the right people in the right roles moving forward to position ourselves to re-engage and rebuild during 2021/22.
- As a result, a new Literature Directorate has been formed to oversee quality and diversity of content and curation, across all aspects of our work. Calderstones programming has been repositioned as part of this Directorate, from where our wider literary content and activity now flows. This department will work closely alongside our Services Directorate who will focus on ensuring this content reaching the children and adults who need it most, through targeted, collaborative work with volunteers and partners and greater emphasis on co-design.
- We supported our workforce throughout furlough and the transition to homeworking during the pandemic by offering flexibility as and when required, by launching a set of effective working practices and by offering Shared Reading and Yoga sessions.
- Work continued on our digital transformation programme as we progressed projects to develop a new dedicated digital space that will support our volunteers on their Reader journey and upgrade our CRM system.
- Whilst inclusion is at the heart of The Reader's mission, we are committed to a more explicit focus on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in our next strategic plan from 2022/23. As we work towards this, in 2020/21 we:
- Held two virtual Think Days for all staff in November and February respectively. Both were focused on discussions around Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and ways to strengthen our approach across all aspects of our delivery, reach and how The Reader is run.
- Commissioned an external review of our recruitment literature and a session on supporting "diversity in recruitment" for senior staff and our People team.
- Took advice from a leading black third sector figure on the best way to build our EDI thinking, and engaged a Director-level coach to help with EDI thought leadership, and to advise on EDI / literary practicalities.

- Set up a Diversity and Inclusion Advocates staff group who support the organisation's thinking around EDI, partly by researching best practice examples from other organisations. This group includes one of our Trustees, Pranav Sood, who has been appointed as our Diversity Advocate on the Board.
- Ran an open Trustee recruitment process in Q4 with an emphasis on attracting a greater diversity of trustees – a new cohort of trustees was appointed in May 2021 which has added to the depth and diversity of background, experience and thinking on our Board.
- We explored how Shared Reading of literature by black writers could help us to better understand our own and others' experience and understanding of racism, and in the process to help spark conversations that could lead to change. We will start an organisational-wide learning project in this area in 2021/22.

Plans for future periods

There is no certainty about what the 21/22 financial year will look like. Progress with the vaccine is positive but the extent of the damage to the economy, and the scale of the resulting mental health and socio-economic problems all remain unclear. We anticipate that many of the new delivery mechanisms and products developed in 2020/21 in response to urgent needs will continue during 21/22.

We will also be undertaking a number of strategic planning exercises as part of the development of the next five-year business plan for 2022 onwards. Whilst that work is underway, at the time of writing our key priorities for 2021/22 are:

- Rebuild our Shared Reading activities across the UK ensuring we collaborate with key partners working with those who will benefit the most from our service.
- Rebuild our Calderstones programme.
- Continue to grow our Children and Young people work.
- Re-engage participants and volunteers.
- Develop our e-learning offer for volunteers.
- Improve our ability to evaluate our variety of new products, particularly our new digital products.
- Embed new CRM and new online community hub ensuring an improved experience for volunteers and improved data returns for the organization.
- Deliver a blended programme offer from our 'virtual' mansion house.
- Start our Coach House refurbishment programme offering opportunities to disadvantaged Young People.
- Continue to develop model for delivery in the Criminal Justice Sector.
- Develop 'Belonging at The Reader – our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy' and Action Plan by December 2021.
- Complete, test and learn from, then reassess organizational restructure in light of Founder's succession plan.

Financial review

The total income in 2020/21 was £3,646,527, a decrease from £4,048,009 in 2019/20. This decrease was a brought about by a reduction in capital grant income as we reached completion of the Mansion House build, and the impact of the pandemic on our ability to deliver on-site activity at Calderstones.

Principle income sources
During 2020/21 The Reader Organisation's income was split across the following sources:

- 30% grants and donations for core activities
- 5% capital grants and donations
- 52% grant and commissioned delivery of Shared Reading (our principal charitable activity) and training of individuals to undertake Shared Reading
- 13 % trading income from our subsidiary, Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company
- <1% event income (principally from the Storybarn)
- <1% investment income

The net income for the year is £179,894. This includes £187,920 grant funding towards the Mansion House project and £48,353 grant funding towards fixtures which have been capitalised and transferred to designated funds. Capital grants are held in designated reserves to be matched against future depreciation costs.

The charity incurred depreciation costs of £245,964 in relation to the Storybarn and Mansion House in 2020/21 and after the associated movement in funds, the Group realised a surplus of £189,585 which is inclusive of a £54,181 donation from Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company, bringing the Charity's year-end surplus to £135,404.

Reserves

The Reserves now stand at £6,663,165.

This includes £5,235,560 of restricted funds that relate to Calderstones Mansion House which, following completion of the build and grant imposed restrictions will transfer to a designated fund and be reduced by associated depreciation charge each year.

The unrestricted funds total £1,427,605. This includes £663,308 of designated funds as detailed in note 22 to the financial statements.

The remaining unrestricted funds £764,297 represents our unrestricted free reserves.

Reserves policy

The charity's reserves policy is to build up unrestricted reserves sufficient to enable the charity's core running costs to be continued for a period of three months, but where possible six months, in the event of regular funding becoming unobtainable. Three months core running costs equates to around £472,236. At the end of financial year 2020/21 the level of unrestricted, undesignated reserves amounts to £764,297, 5 months core running costs.

Public Benefit

The majority of activities provided by The Reader are funded by third parties, principally public sector bodies but additionally, from charitable trusts and partner organisations. There is an annual programme of activities, with some activities carrying a charge, however the majority of the programme, both nationally and at Calderstones, is free at the point of entry. The trustees have had due regard to the guidance published by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Funders and Commissioners
Age UK Bristol – Bristol Ageing Better
Arts Council England
BBC Children in Need
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Council
Cheltenham Festivals
Cheshire Community Foundation
Cheshire West and Chester Council and The Westminster Foundation
City Bridge Trust
Department of Digital Culture Media & Sport
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council
Dorset Council
EPIC Private Equity LLP
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust
Hackney Council
Hammersmith and Fulham Council
Hampshire Cultural Trust
Haringey Council
Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service
HMP Frankland
HMP Low Newton
HMP Swansea
HMP Wakefield
HMP Whitemoor
Jewish Care
Knowsley Clinical Commissioning Group
Liverpool Charity and Voluntary Services (LCVS)
Liverpool City Council
Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Trust
New Writing North
NHS Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group
North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
Northern Ireland Public Health Agency
Notting Hill Genesis Wellbeing Fund
People's Postcode Lottery
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
Salford CVS
Sefton Council
Sheffield City Council
Somerset County Council
Steve Morgan Foundation
Suffolk Community Foundation through The Hopkins Charitable Trust
Suffolk Community Foundation through Maurken Fund
Suffolk Community Foundation through Suffolk Police & Crime Commissioners Fund
Suffolk Community Foundation through The New Anglia LEP Community Challenge Fund
Suffolk Community Foundation through Vestey Holdings
The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington
The Community Foundation for Merseyside
The Evan Cornish Foundation
The Granada Foundation

The National Lottery Community Fund
The National Lottery Heritage Fund
The National Lottery Wales
The Prince of Wales's Charitable Fund
The Tudor Trust
The Limbourne Trust
Whittard of Chelsea
Wigan Borough Clinical Commissioning Group
Wirral Council
Woodchurch High School

Investment Power and Policy
Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the charity has the power to invest in any lawful way the trustees wish, after having obtained such advice from a financial expert as the trustees consider necessary having regard to the suitability of investments and the need for diversification. All reserves are held in deposit accounts and no investments were made during the year.

Risk Review
The Reader is committed to sound business practice and the embedding of risk management into the organisation's culture. Both the Reader and the Calderstones Mansion House CIC have risk registers that are used to gain a comprehensive view of the work of the organisations, and reveals strengths and opportunities as well as weaknesses. Risk assessments involve staff from across the organisation and the formal risk registers are reviewed by the Audit Committee at each meeting, with high level risks being reviewed by the Board. The register details the steps and procedures in place to mitigate the risks.

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Payment of creditors
The company's current policy concerning the payment of trade creditors is to follow the CBI's Prompt Payers Code (copies are available from the CBI, Centre Point, 103 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1DU). The company's current policy concerning the payment of trade creditors is to:

- settle the terms of payment with suppliers when agreeing the terms of each transaction;
- ensure that suppliers are made aware of the terms of payment by inclusion of the relevant terms in contracts; and
- pay in accordance with the company's contractual and other legal obligations.

Trade creditors of the company at the year end were equivalent to 38 day's purchases, based on the average daily amount invoiced by suppliers during the year.

Structure, governance and management

The Reader Organisation is a registered charity and also a company limited by guarantee. It is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association that were updated and adopted on the 13th November 2017.

The charity is governed by a Board of Trustees which must be made up of between three and twelve individuals. The board meets four times a year.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Mrs A S Marsland (Chair)	
Ms R Hawley ME JP DL	
Mr G Brand	(Resigned 17 November 2020)
Mr H Biddell	
Ms G Rabindrakumar	(Resigned 17 November 2020)
Dr R M Hussey	
Mr P L Davies	
Mr P K Sood	
Mrs Sarah Fletcher	(Appointed 14 September 2020)

Trustees Recruitment, Induction and Training

When a trustee vacancy arises a recruitment process including advertisement, application and interview as necessary is overseen by the nominations committee in line with good practice guidance. The Reader has designed a comprehensive induction for new Trustees that includes but is not limited to:

- A briefing from the Chair
- Meeting with other Trustees
- Meeting with each of the Directors' Group
- Shared Reading with Directors' Group
- Meeting as many Reader staff as possible at the first opportunity

This programme of meetings is accompanied by an induction pack that includes useful papers such as:

- The Reader's Business Plan
- Copies of previous Board minutes
- The Reader's Memorandum and Articles of Association
- Charity Commission guidance 'Being a Trustee' and 'The Essential Trustee: What you need to know'
- A welcome letter from the Chair
- Trustee role description
- Latest annual report and final accounts
- Vision, mission and key facts
- Information on conflict of interests

A Committee structure is in place to support the Trustees in ensuring good governance. During the financial year there have been three Committees in operation: (i) the Audit Committee, which oversees governance and risk (ii) the Capital Committee, which oversaw the refurbishment of the Mansion House and which was disbanded following its meeting on 9th September 2019 upon completion of the Mansion House refurbishment and (iii) the Nominations Committee which oversees Trustee appointments.

The Calderstones Mansion House CIC has its own Board of 6 Directors. There are four members of The Reader Board who sit on the Calderstones CIC Board of Directors. Minutes of the CIC are submitted to The Reader Board as parent company. Both the Audit Committee and Capital Committee are Group Committees that oversee the work of the CIC as well as The Reader.

The Trustees have appointed a Director to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity.

Senior Staff Remuneration
The Reader pays salaries according to a salary band system. Banding is based on the responsibilities attached to roles. One member of staff received remuneration over £60,000 in the financial year.

Staff and Volunteers
The trustees acknowledge the commitment and dedication of the charity's staff and volunteers which has been critical to the success of the organisation over the course of the year. Without the generosity of these people, who regularly go above and beyond what is asked of them, The Reader would not have reached as many people or helped change as many lives.

Disclosure of information to auditor
Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

The Trustees' report report, including the strategic report, was approved by the Board of Trustees.

A. S. Marsland

Mrs A S Marsland (Chair)

Dated: 13 September 2021

THE READER ORGANISATION

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' REPORT RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

The trustees, who are also the directors of The Reader Organisation for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company Law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;

- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

THE READER ORGANISATION

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE READER ORGANISATION

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Reader Organisation (the 'charity') and it's subsidiary for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the consolidated statement of financial activities, the consolidated and charity balance sheet, the consolidated statement of cash flows and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group and charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' report use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of our audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' report report, which includes the directors' report and the strategic report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report included within the Trustees' report report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the directors' report included within the Trustees' report report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate and proper accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of Trustees' report responsibilities, the trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose of company law, is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees is responsible for assessing the group and charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with the Acts and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the group through discussions with trustees and other management, and from our knowledge and experience of charity sector;
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the group, including the Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2011, data protection, anti-bribery, employment, food hygiene and health and safety legislation;
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management team and inspecting legal correspondence; and identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team regularly and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the group's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management team as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships;
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions;
- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims; and
- reviewing correspondence with HMRC and relevant regulators.

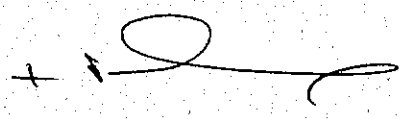
There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and to the regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company, the charitable company's members as a body,and the charitable company's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Helen Furlong FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of McLintocks (NW) Limited

21.09.21

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

46 Hamilton Square
Birkenhead
Wirral
Merseyside
CH41 5AR

THE READER ORGANISATION

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £	Unrestricted funds 2020 £	Restricted funds 2020 £	Total 2020 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	3	1,079,948	188,100	1,268,048	896,651	600,954	1,497,605
Charitable activities	4	677,646	1,216,918	1,894,564	857,360	902,058	1,759,418
Other trading activities	5	483,173	-	483,173	785,867	-	785,867
Investments	6	742	-	742	5,119	-	5,119
Total income		2,241,509	1,405,018	3,646,527	2,544,997	1,503,012	4,048,009
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	7	582,689	-	582,689	766,807	-	766,807
Charitable activities	8	1,515,934	1,368,010	2,883,944	1,670,706	1,035,941	2,706,647
Total resources expended		2,098,623	1,368,010	3,466,633	2,437,513	1,035,941	3,473,454
Net incoming resources before transfers		142,886	37,008	179,894	107,484	467,071	574,555
Gross transfers between funds		48,353	(48,353)	-	-	-	-
Net income/(expenditure) for the year/ Net movement in funds		191,239	(11,345)	179,894	107,484	467,071	574,555
Fund balances at 1 April 2020		1,236,366	5,246,905	6,483,271	1,128,882	4,779,834	5,908,716
Fund balances at 31 March 2021		1,427,605	5,235,560	6,663,165	1,236,366	5,246,905	6,483,271

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

THE READER ORGANISATION

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		5,595,561		5,563,899
Current assets					
Stocks	15	17,156		19,348	
Debtors	16	278,060		213,984	
Cash at bank and in hand		2,507,103		2,156,080	
		2,802,319		2,389,412	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	(1,734,715)		(1,470,040)	
Net current assets			1,067,604		919,372
Total assets less current liabilities			6,663,165		6,483,271
Income funds					
Restricted funds	21		5,235,560		5,246,905
Unrestricted funds	22		1,427,605		1,236,366
			6,663,165		6,483,271

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 13 September 2021

A. S. Marsland.

Mrs A S Marsland (Chair)
Trustee

Company Registration No. 06607389

THE READER ORGANISATION

CHARITY BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		5,595,561		5,563,899
Investments	14		1		1
			5,595,562		5,563,900
Current assets					
Debtors falling due within one year	17	332,921		205,875	
Cash at bank and in hand		2,409,078		2,108,450	
		2,741,999		2,314,325	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	19	(1,674,396)		(1,391,468)	
Net current assets			1,067,603		922,857
Total assets less current liabilities			6,663,165		6,486,757
Income funds					
Restricted funds	21		5,235,560		5,246,905
Unrestricted funds	23		1,427,605		1,239,852
			6,663,165		6,486,757

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 13 September 2021

A. S. Marsland.

Mrs A S Marsland (Chair)
Trustee

Company Registration No. 06607389

THE READER ORGANISATION

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	30		638,998		(1,177)
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(288,717)		(1,031,891)	
Interest received		742		5,119	
Net cash used in investing activities			(287,975)		(1,026,772)
Financing activities					
Repayment of bank loans				(17,108)	
Net cash used in financing activities			-		(17,108)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents			351,023		(1,045,057)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			2,156,080		3,201,137
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			2,507,103		2,156,080

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Reader Organisation is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is The Mansion House, Calderstones Park, Liverpool, Merseyside, L18 3JB.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's [governing document], the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

The trustees have reviewed the principle risks and uncertainties as a result of the covid-19 pandemic on the group. Although the impact of the covid-19 pandemic could well have a medium term effect, the trustees are confident that the group has adequate resources and support to continue as a going concern in the long term.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the accounts.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Voluntary income include donations which are accounted for as received by the charity.

These items are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability. Such income is only deferred when:

- The donor specifies that the grant or donation must only be used in future accounting years; or
- The donor has imposed conditions which must be met before the charity has unconditional settlement.

Investment income relates to bank interest receivable.

1 Accounting policies

Income from charitable activities includes income received under contract or where entitlement to grant funding is subject to specific performance conditions and is recognised as earned as the related goods or services are provided. Grant income included within this category provides funding to advance the education of the public in reading and the appreciation of literature.

Grants received in advance of the period in which the funder requires the expenditure to be applied will be reflected in deferred income within the balance sheet.

Income from the trading subsidiary turnover represents amounts received and receivable for goods supplied (excluding value added tax an voluntary gratuities left by customers for the benefit of employees) and is recognised at the point of sale.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised when a liability is incurred.

Charitable activities expenditure includes both direct costs and support costs relating to these activities.

Governance costs include those incurred in the governance of the charity and its assets and are primarily associated with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Leasehold improvements	Over a period of 10 years. Mansion house refurbishment over 50 years
Fixtures and fittings	Over a period of 3 years. Leasehold fit out over 10 years
Computers	Over a period of 3 years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

All assets costing more than £750 are capitalised at cost.

1.7 Fixed asset investments

Fixed asset investments are initially measured at transaction price excluding transaction costs, and are subsequently measured at fair value at each reporting date. Changes in fair value are recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year. Transaction costs are expensed as incurred.

A subsidiary is an entity controlled by the charity. Control is the power to govern the financial and operating policies of the entity so as to obtain benefits from its activities.

1 Accounting policies

1.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.9 Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value, after making due allowance for obsolete and slow moving items.

Net realisable value is the estimated selling price less all estimated costs of completion and costs to be incurred in marketing, selling and distribution.

1.10 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.11 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1 Accounting policies

1.12 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.13 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

1.14 Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases, including any lease incentives received, are charged as an expense on a straight line basis over the term of the relevant lease.

1.15 Consolidation

The group financial statements consolidated the results of The Reader Organisation and its subsidiary undertaking, Calderstones Mansion House CIC, on a line buy line basis.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	**Restricted funds**	**Total**	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2021	**2021**	**2021**	2020	2020	2020
	£	**£**	**£**	£	£	£
Donations and gifts	16,592	180	16,772	71,651	28,675	100,326
Grants receivable for core activities	1,063,356	-	1,063,356	825,000	18,333	843,333
Grants receivable for capital projects	-	187,920	187,920	-	553,946	553,946
	1,079,948	188,100	1,268,048	896,651	600,954	1,697,605

	Unrestricted funds	**Restricted funds**	**Total**	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2021	**2021**	**2021**	2020	2020	2020
	£	**£**	**£**	£	£	£
Grants receivable for core activities						
AB Charitable Trust	-	-	-	-	18,333	18,333
Arts Council England National Portfolio Office	178,220	-	178,220	175,000	-	175,000
People's Postcode Lottery	625,840	-	625,840	650,000	-	650,000
CJRS grant	257,853	-	257,853	-	-	-
Tudor Trust	1,443	-	1,443	-	-	-
	1,063,356	-	1,063,356	825,000	18,333	843,333

4 Charitable activities

	Shared reading 2021	Storybarn 2021	Total 2021	Shared reading 2020	Storybarn 2020	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Commissions & Training	670,453	-	670,453	768,613	-	768,613
Grants	1,216,918	-	1,216,918	902,058	-	902,058
Events income	952	6,241	7,193	6,466	82,281	88,747
	1,888,323	6,241	1,894,564	1,677,137	82,281	1,759,418
Analysis by fund						
Unrestricted funds	671,405	6,241	677,646	775,079	82,281	857,360
Restricted funds	1,216,918	-	1,216,918	902,058	-	902,058
	1,888,323	6,241	1,894,564	1,677,137	82,281	1,759,418
Grants related to charitable activities						
Age UK Brightlife	-	-	-	19,781	-	19,781
Knowsley CCG	17,617	-	17,617	-	-	-
National Lottery Community Fund	247,326	-	247,326	377,792	-	377,792
National Lottery Fund Wales	56,811	-	56,811	102,667	-	102,667
Age UK Bristol Ageing Better	14,357	-	14,357	60,154	-	60,154
City Bridge	6,050	-	6,050	18,150	-	18,150
BBC Children In Need	39,878	-	39,878	37,036	-	37,036
Esmee Fairbarn Foundation	51,863	-	51,863	51,863	-	51,863
Steve Morgan Foundation and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport	462,300	-	462,300	-	-	-
Lottery Coronavirus Community Support Fund	34,554	-	34,554	-	-	-
Somerset County Council	9,048	-	9,048	22,720	-	22,720
Steve Morgan Foundation	140,729	-	140,729	96,036	-	96,036
Prince of Wales Trust	47,290	-	47,290	35,827	-	35,827
Mercers	21,543	-	21,543	-	-	-
Others	67,552	-	67,552	72,737	-	72,737
	1,216,918	-	1,216,918	902,058	-	902,058

5 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2021	2020
	£	£
Cafe,ice-cream parlour and other income	483,173	785,867

6 Investments

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2021	2020
	£	£
Interest receivable	742	5,119

7 Raising funds

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2021	2020
	£	£
Trading costs		
Operating costs	248,577	381,445
Other staff costs	287	900
Staff costs	333,825	384,462
Trading costs	582,689	766,807

8 Charitable activities

	Shared reading 2021	Storybarn 2021	Total 2021	Shared reading 2020	Storybarn 2020	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	1,576,787	20,185	1,596,972	1,372,235	84,860	1,457,095
Depreciation and impairment	-	44,528	44,528	-	46,037	46,037
Other expenditure	537,112	52	537,164	540,867	17,187	558,054
	2,113,899	64,765	2,178,664	1,913,102	148,084	2,061,186
Share of support costs (see note 9)	683,801	2,259	686,060	588,423	46,338	634,761
Share of governance costs (see note 9)	19,157	63	19,220	9,919	781	10,700
	2,816,857	67,087	2,883,944	2,511,444	195,203	2,706,647
Analysis by fund						
Unrestricted funds	1,448,847	67,087	1,515,934	1,475,503	195,203	1,670,706
Restricted funds	1,368,010	-	1,368,010	1,035,941	-	1,035,941
	2,816,857	67,087	2,883,944	2,511,444	195,203	2,706,647

9 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2021	Support costs	Governance costs	2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	330,658	-	330,658	365,402	-	365,402
Depreciation	208,966	-	208,966	126,073	-	126,073
Other costs	146,436	-	146,436	143,286	-	143,286
Audit fees	-	9,000	9,000	-	6,000	6,000
Accountancy	-	10,220	10,220	-	4,700	4,700
	686,060	19,220	705,280	634,761	10,700	645,461
Analysed between						
Charitable activities	686,060	19,220	705,280	634,761	10,700	645,461

10 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2021 Number	2020 Number
Shared Reading	79	79
Support Services	12	12
Storybarn	13	13
Calderstones Mansion House CIC	30	37
Total	134	141

Employment costs	2021 £	2020 £
Wages and salaries	2,018,551	1,960,813
Social security costs	133,249	141,232
Other pension costs	109,655	104,914
	2,261,455	2,206,959

Remuneration of key management personnel

Total remuneration received during the year by key management personnel amounted to £310,708 (2020: £300,487).

Retirement benefit schemes

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the Charity in an independently administered fund.

The charge to the statement of financial activities in respect of defined contribution schemes was £109,655 (2020: £104,914).

There were outstanding contributions in respect of defined contribution schemes at 31 March 2021 of nil (2020: £10,681).

The number of employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more were:

	2021 Number	2020 Number
£60,000 - £70,000	1	-

11 Trustees

None of the trustees received any remuneration during either the current or previous year, and no trustees were reimbursed for travelling expenses (2020: £1,850).

12 Calderstones Mansion House CIC

A summary of the results of the subsidiary is shown below:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Income	465,792	757,566
Expenditure	(462,306)	(761,052)
	3,486	(3,486)

Aggregate assets and liabilities

Current assets	134,345	78,236
Current liabilities	(134,344)	(81,721)
	1	(3,485)

13 Tangible fixed assets - Group and Company

	Leasehold Improvements	Fixtures and fittings	Computers	Total
	£	£	£	£
Cost				
At 1 April 2020	4,691,505	1,240,038	30,700	5,962,243
Additions	233,467	49,970	5,280	288,717
Disposals	-	(10,600)	-	(10,600)
At 31 March 2021	4,924,972	1,279,408	35,980	6,240,360
Depreciation and impairment				
At 1 April 2020	247,934	138,038	12,371	398,343
Depreciation charged in the year	129,655	120,221	7,180	257,056
Eliminated in respect of disposals	-	(10,600)	-	(10,600)
At 31 March 2021	377,589	247,659	19,551	644,799
Carrying amount				
At 31 March 2021	4,547,383	1,031,749	16,429	5,595,561
At 31 March 2020	4,443,569	1,102,000	18,330	5,563,899

14 Fixed asset investments - Group undertakings

The charity owns the whole of the issued share capital of the following subsidary undertaking which is registered in England and has the same registered office as the charity.

Subsidiary	Principal activity
Calderstones Mansion House CIC	Restaurants and cafes

The carrying value of the investment in the financial statements is £1 (2020:£1).

15 Stocks - Group

	2021	2020
	£	£
Goods for resale	17,156	19,348

16 Debtors - Group

	2021	2020
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Trade debtors	21,076	200,072
Other debtors	194,784	870
Prepayments and accrued income	62,200	13,042
	278,060	213,984

17 Debtors - Charity

	2021	2020
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Trade debtors	8,858	192,833
Amounts owed by subsidiary undertakings	74,025	-
Other debtors	187,920	-
Prepayments and accrued income	62,118	13,042
	332,921	205,875

18 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year - Group

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Other taxation and social security		1,085	45,596
Deferred income	20	1,111,043	984,832
Trade creditors		223,311	99,782
Other creditors		360,655	286,440
Accruals		38,621	53,391
		1,734,715	1,470,041

20 Creditors:amounts falling due within one year - Charity

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Other taxation and social security		-	23,512
Deferred income	20	1,085,090	984,832
Trade creditors		201,513	69,731
Amounts owed to subsidiary undertakings		-	3,183
Other creditors		359,196	265,159
Accruals and deferred income		28,597	45,051
		1,674,396	1,391,468

20 Deferred income - Group & Charity

	2021 £	2020 £
Other deferred income	1,111,043	984,832

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Balance at 1 April 2020	984,832	1,066,080
Amounts received in year	2,242,887	1,165,043
Amounts credited to statement of financial activities	(2,116,676)	(1,246,291)
Balance at 31 March 2021	1,111,043	984,832

21 **Restricted funds - Group & Charity**

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

	Movement in funds				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2019	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 1 April 2020	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Shared Reading	-	920,391	(920,391)	-	1,217,098	(1,168,745)	(48,353)	-
Calderstones Mansion House	4,779,834	582,621	(115,550)	5,246,905	187,920	(199,265)	-	5,235,560
	4,779,833	1,503,012	(1,035,941)	5,246,905	1,405,018	(1,368,010)	(48,353)	5,235,560

Shared Reading
Shared Reading includes our core work of delivering shared reading groups. This is funded through grants and commissions (please refer to notes 3 and 4 for further information).

Calderstones Mansion House
The Calderstones Mansion House is the charities headquarters based at our site within Calderstones Park. Grants have been received from Heritage Lottery, Liverpool City Council, Tudor Trust and other funders to refurbish the building. The money for this project has been split between restricted funds and a designated unrestricted fund depending on the nature of the income received. Following the completion of the building works and satisfaction of the restrictions within the grants, the restricted fund will be transferred to the designated unrestricted fund where it will be reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year.

22 Unrestricted funds - Group

The unrestricted funds of the charity also include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

	Movement in funds				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2019	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 1 April 2020	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General unrestricted	574,706	2,544,997	(2,392,985)	726,718	2,241,509	(2,052,440)	(151,490)	764,297
Storybarn Building	307,247	-	(44,528)	262,719	-	(44,528)	-	218,191
Calderstones Mansion House	246,929	-	-	246,929	-	(1,655)	(159,691)	85,583
Grant funded fixtures	-	-	-	-	-	-	48,353	48,353
Mansion House support fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	54,181	54,181
Personnel investment fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	143,000	143,000
IT re-structure and infrastructure fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	93,000	93,000
Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	21,000	21,000
	1,128,882	2,544,997	(2,437,513)	1,236,366	2,241,509	(2,098,623)	48,353	1,427,605

22 **Unrestricted funds - Group**

Storybarn Building
The Storybarn represents the capital cost of the building. This fund will be reduced by the associated depreciation charge each year.

Calderstones Mansion House
The Calderstones Mansion House is the charities headquarters based at our site within Calderstones Park. Grants have been received from Heritage Lottery, Liverpool City Council, Tudor Trust and other funders to refurbish the building. The money for this project has been split between restricted funds and a designated unrestricted fund depending on the nature of the income received. Following the completion of the building works and satisfaction of the restrictions within the grants, the restricted fund will be transferred to the designated unrestricted fund where it will be reduced by an associated depreciation charge each year.

Mansion House support fund
This represents a re-investment of a charitable donation from the Charity's subsidiary, Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company, towards the site and operations that underpin our charitable work during the first full operational year at Calderstones and in the aftermath of the pandemic

Personnel investment fund
The Trustees have designated a Personnel Investment Fund to facilitate growth by aligning workforce planning to strategic plans. This fund will enable the organisation to invest in the future through the implementation of a new reward and recognition programme for staff and enablement of succession planning.

IT re-structure and infrastructure fund
The Board of Trustees recognise technology's strategic importance as a critical component of the Charity's activities and have designated an IT re-structure and infrastructure fund to invest in The Charity's technology capabilities.

Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund
The sinking fund is set up to provide a provision for future major repairs to Calderstones Mansion House. The agreed amount to be transferred each year from the general reserves is £21,000.

23 Unrestricted funds - Charity

The unrestricted funds of the charity also include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

	Movement in funds					Movement in funds				
	Balance at 1 April 2019	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Revaluations, gains and losses	Balance at 1 April 2020	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Revaluations, gains and losses	Balance at 31 March 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General unrestricted	574,706	1,787,431	(1,631,933)		730,204	1,612,080	(1,426,497)	(151,490)		764,297
Storybarn Building	307,247	-	(44,528)	-	262,719	-	(44,528)	-	-	218,191
Calderstones Mansion House	246,929	-	-		246,929	-	(1,655)	(159,691)		85,583
Grant funded fixtures	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	48,353	-	48,353
Mansion House support fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	54,181	-	54,181
Personnel investment fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	143,000	-	143,000
IT re-structure and infrastructure fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	93,000	-	93,000
Calderstones Mansion House sinking fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21,000	-	21,000
	1,128,882	1,787,431	(1,676,461)		1,239,852	1,612,080	1,472,680	48,353	-	1,427,605

23 Unrestricted funds - Charity

Storybarn Building
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Calderstones Mansion House
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24 Related party transactions

No guarantees have been given or received.

J Davis (Founder and Director) is a director for the Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company and does not receive any additional remuneration for this role.

S Fletcher is a director for the Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company and resigned from her position as Chief Operating Officer and Director of Finance in May 2021. During her time as Chief Operating Officer and Director of Finance Sarah Fletcher received no additional remuneration for her role as a Director of Calderstones Mansion House Community Interest Company.

25 Analysis of net assets between funds - Group

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2021	2021	2021	2020	2020	2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 March 2021 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	360,001	5,235,560	5,595,561	275,304	5,288,595	5,563,899
Current assets/(liabilities)	1,067,603	-	1,067,604	961,062	(41,691)	919,371
	1,427,604	5,235,560	6,663,165	1,236,366	5,246,904	6,483,270

27 Analysis of net assets between funds - Charity

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2021	2021	2021	2020	2020	2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 March 2021 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	360,001	5,235,560	5,595,561	275,304	5,288,595	5,563,899
Investments	1	-	1	1	-	1
Current assets/(liabilities)	1,067,603	-	1,067,603	964,547	(41,690)	922,857
	1,427,605	5,235,560	6,663,165	1,239,852	5,246,905	6,486,757

27 Company limited by guarantee

The charitable company is limited by guarantee and has no share capital. Every member of the charity undertakes to contribute to the assets of the charity in the event of being wound up while he or she is a member or within one year of ceasing to be a member for debts and liabilities of the charity contracted before he or she ceases to be a member, such amounts as may be required not exceeding £10.

28 Operating lease commitments

At the reporting end date the charity had outstanding commitments for future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases, which fall due as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Within one year	30,838	9,562
Between two and five years	117,961	82,926
In over five years	3,317,040	3,367,717
	3,465,839	3,460,205

29 Analysis of changes in net funds

The charity had no debt during the year.

30 Cash generated from operations

	2021	2020
	£	£
Surplus for the year	179,894	574,555
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(742)	(5,119)
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	257,056	172,111
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease/(increase) in stocks	2,192	(15,668)
(Increase) in debtors	(64,076)	(25,536)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	138,463	(620,272)
Increase/(decrease) in deferred income	126,211	(81,248)
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	638,998	(1,177)