WRITING WEST MIDLANDS LTD

England & Wales · Charity number 1147710

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	06264124
Registered	2012-06-15
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	130 Zellig Building Gibb Street Birmingham B9 4AT
Phone	01212462770
Email	jonathan@writingwestmidlands.org
Website	www.writingwestmidlands.org

Activities

Objects: TO ADVANCE EDUCATION IN THE ARTS FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT BY PROMOTION OF CREATIVE WRITING, IN PARTICULAR BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY IN THE WEST MIDLANDS REGION OF THE UK.

Activities: To advance education in the arts for the public benefit by promotion of creative writing in particular but not exclusively in the West Midlands region of the UK.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Arts/culture/heritage/science
- **Who:** Children/young People, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Throughout England

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Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£320,291	£294,795	-	-
2024-03-31	£268,485	£278,379	-	-
2023-03-31	£348,799	£342,432	-	-
2022-03-31	£468,281	£457,749	-	-
2021-03-31	£279,585	£239,118	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Dr Lisa Blower		2019-12-01
George Dane Bastow		2019-12-01
Jacqueline Francis		2025-11-10
Laura Aimee Willis		2021-12-01
Nikki Bi		2019-12-01
Olwen Jane Brown		2017-05-14
Professor Gregory Leadbetter		2013-09-10
Professor Thomas Edward Glave Jr		2021-11-05
Robert James Elkington		2021-12-01
Sandra van Lente		2022-12-01
Susan Gail Ball		2025-11-10

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WRITING WEST MIDLANDS LTD

England & Wales - Charity number 1147710

Accounts

Writing West Midlands Ltd

(a Company Limited by Guarantee)

Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

Registered Company number 06264124

Registered Charity number 1147710

Writing West Midlands Ltd
Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 March 2025

Index

	Page
Report of the Trustees	3-11
Statement of Trustees responsibilities	12
Report of the independent examiner	13
Statement of financial activities (incorporating an Income & Expenditure Account)	14
Balance sheet	15
Principal Accounting Policies	16-18
Notes to the financial statements	19-28

Report of the Trustees

The directors of Writing West Midlands Ltd ("the charitable company") are its Trustees for the purpose of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as its Trustees. The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, 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 (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019).

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting the charitable company's report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The objects of the Charity, as set out in its Memorandum and Articles of Association, are to advance education in the arts for the public benefit by promotion of creative writing, in particular but not exclusively in the UK's West Midlands region.

To achieve these objects Writing West Midlands has a series of **Objectives**, as follows:

Workforce/Talent Development - Workforce/Talent Development activities develop the skills and talents of creative writers in all genres and forms.

Artform/Sector Development - Artform/Sector Development activities challenge and support the literature sector to develop the highest quality of creative writing.

Participation/Market Development - Participation/Market Development activities encourage emerging and established writers to participate in opportunities created or signposted.

Audience/Readership Development - Audience/Readership Development activities develop audiences/readers for new writers and their work.

Young People Engagement - Young People Engagement activities offer children and young people the opportunity to develop as creative writers.

Regional Development - Regional Development activities promote writing in the West Midlands in partnership with national and international organisations.

National/International Development - National and International Development activities develop the national offer for literature development and create opportunities for our writers to work beyond the UK.

Organisational Development - Organisational Development activities improve the way we run our organisation, including developing staff, volunteers and our Board of Trustees.

Our pursuit of these **Objectives** is informed by our commitment to Arts Council England's Let's Create Strategy and its Investment Principles. **Objectives** are delivered through activities across four main areas of work, along with work to support our Governance, Management and Organisational Development. These four areas of work and their activities are as follows:

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Writer Development

We support emerging and established writers with a programme of events and activities. This includes our annual writer networking conference (The National Writers' Conference), our Room 204 Writer Development Scheme and regular one-to-one advice and guidance sessions. We offer universities Creative Writing Career Seminars for their students.

We run a year-round programme of writing workshops and short-courses and other creative writing activities. We work with other organisations, for instance regional publishers, to create creative opportunities for writers. We make links with writing communities outside the UK to develop opportunities for writers in our region. We also run regional networks of university creative writing courses, literary translators and independent literary publishers.

Young Writers

We work with children and young people to develop their interest in creative writing, largely through out of school activities but also with schools. This includes running our network of Spark Young Writers' Groups, publishing an online creative writing magazine for young writers and running our Careers in Writing Day (offering advice for young people about the writing industry).

Festival & Events

We develop audiences/readers for emerging and established writers and their work. This focuses on our Birmingham Literature Festival. We run a regional network of literature festival producers and provide on-going advice and guidance to other event organisers. We run an online programme of monthly conversations with writers from beyond the Anglospere.

Reader Development

We manage the West Midlands Readers' Network, an Arts Council England funded project that works with readers groups, public libraries and independent bookshops to provide support for 'creative reading'. This includes an annual online conference for public library and independent bookshop staff, a short story commissioning programme and an events programme for readers groups.

Governance, Management & Organisational Development

We work constantly to improve the ways in which our organisation is governed, managed and organised. This includes offering training for staff, for volunteers and for our Board of Trustees, regular updating of our policies and our financial management and IT systems. Much of our governance is managed through our sub-committees, currently Finance & Resources (including Contributed Income), Personnel, Diversity, Sales & Marketing, Artistic Policy and Young Writers Sub-Committees.

When reviewing and planning activities over the year, Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'. To broaden access and achieve our stated aims, we set costs of attendance and participation at the lowest possible level and offer many events, activities and

services at no cost. We offer Bursary places across all our events and activities for those who are economically marginalised. We adopted the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and will use these to guide our work.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Writer Development

Our Writer Development work continued to focus on emerging writers requiring a range of support to develop and sustain their creative careers, but also included working with established writers who found themselves increasingly in need of similar support. This work included on-going sign-posting through social media, public events, training and one to one mentoring for those on our Room 204 Writer Development Scheme and for others.

Room 204 Writer Development Programme & One to One Mentoring

A further 15 emerging or established writers joined our Room 204 Writer Development Programme in 2024, selected from 84 applications, bringing the membership up to 202, including people from all 14 West Midlands local authority areas in the region. The Programme offered workshops, one to one career mentoring and free entrance to our 2025 National Writers Conference (for those newly joined). Our Room 204 Exchanges continued, offering a monthly one hour sharing online of skills knowledge and by a Room 204 writer or other expert for other Room 204 writers.

Existing participants in the Room 204 Programme continued to receive one to one mentoring. Our Chief Executive continued to contact Room 204 writers from early cohorts, offering additional one to one time. The Room 204 Programme is unique in offering permanent and ongoing support to those who are selected to join. 100% of those on the Programme indicated a satisfaction level of good or excellent. One to one mentoring on all aspects of the writing industry was also offered to other writers and literature professionals and, including one to ones with Room 204 writers, a total of 137 sessions were delivered during the year.

We continued to run a paid for mentoring programme for the regional publisher Nine Arches Press and offered smaller scale and un-costed support for other independent publishers and other literature development organisations in the region.

National Writers Conference, Short Courses & Workshops

Our annual National Writers Conference was hosted by University of Birmingham, with a highest ever booking/attendance figure of 214. Our programme of short courses and workshops continued, largely online and with some in-person workshops run as part of the Birmingham Literature Festival. A total of 701 people attended 51 training sessions and 1,530 hours of training was provided. The satisfaction level for our short courses, workshops and the National Writers Conference was 100% good or excellent.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Other Writer Development Initiatives

Having taken over overall management of both the Birmingham Poet Laureate and Birmingham Young Poet Laureate from July 2024 onwards, we assisted in recruitment and appointment of the Birmingham Poet Laureate 2024 – 26 (Ayan Aden) and provided mentoring. We provided mentoring for the Coventry Poet Laureate 2023 – 2025 (John Bernard) and some support for the Coventry Young Poet Laureate 2023 – 2025 (Aamani Kanda).

We managed regional recruitment for writers from disadvantaged backgrounds to receive critical readings ('free reads') of creative writing through The Literacy Consultancy. We ran six Regional Writers Meet-Ups to introduce our work to emerging writers across the region. We managed regional Universities Creative Writing, Literary Translators and Independent Publishers Networks, the latter including some Independent Booksellers.

We continued to support our Keele University and Birmingham City University Collaborative Doctoral Research Students as they worked on their PhDs. We advised the JAAG Festival on delivery of their festival in Birmingham during July 2024, having successfully applied for funding from Arts Council England on their behalf.

Young Writers

Activities with Young Writers from age 8 upwards continued to be a significant element of our programme of activities. Most of this work was delivered through our Spark Young Writers Programme. During 2024/25 we commissioned and received an early draft of a research report into the longitudinal impact of participation in our Spark Young Writers Groups.

Spark Young Writers Groups

The number of Spark Young Writers Groups increased to 24, with three of these being online and the rest being in various locations across the region. Satisfaction rates for these groups (good or excellent) was 90%. Some Spark Young Writers Groups were partly supported by funds from Shropshire Libraries and Staffordshire Libraries, following successful National Lottery Project Grant Applications submitted to Arts Council England on behalf of these library authorities by Writing West Midlands.

Publications & Other Activities

We published two online editions of our Spark Young Writers Magazine, professionally edited and with contributions from young writers across the region and we published one hardcopy Spark Young Writers Anthology. We ran a celebratory event in July 2024 to mark the participation of young people in our programme.

Summary of Young Writers Provision

In total, we offered 240 training sessions and 4,738 hours of engagement. We had 2,397 attendances at sessions and these came from 22 local authority areas, including all West Midlands areas and some local authority areas beyond the West Midlands.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Festivals & Events

Birmingham Literature Festival

The Birmingham Literature Festival was presented from 28th September to 19th October across 9 venues (Legacy Centre of Excellence, Kings Heath Library, Handsworth Library, The Rep, The Exchange, Birmingham Cathedral, Acocks Green Library, Erdington Library, Zoom). Ther programme was an eclectic mixture of talks, discussions, performances and workshops, focussing on high quality writing. The programme featured 53 authors, with 33 of these authors were either based in the Midlands/or had a strong connection to the Midlands in their work

Satisfaction rates for the Birmingham Literature Festival (good or excellent) reached 96%. A total of 3,546 tickets were sold/taken. We produced a book, *Forward,* to celebrate 25 years of the festival, with 3,000 copies gifted to audiences and public libraries. Partnership with Transport for West Midlands enabled us to offer attendees access to one week's free bus travel to encourage sustainable travel. We hosted a group of 29 Ukrainian creative writing students, who were offered complimentary tickets to events hosted at the Rep

Year-Round Events

Our Birmingham International Literary Salon continued to present a monthly online discussion event with writers from beyond the Anglosphere, attracting between 15 and 20 participants upon each occasion. Guests included writers from Greece, New Zealand/China, Latvia, Turkey, Taiwan, France, Basque Country, Germany, Somalia and Armenia.

Reader Development

Our Reader Development work focused on our management of the West Midlands Readers' Network, using National Lottery Project Grant funding from Arts Council England to run a programme of work from April 2024 until March 2025.

The programme of work included a short story commissioning scheme with readers groups, an online day conference for public library staff on reader development (the *Librarians' Virtual Toolkit*), two Reading Spas, one reader in residence programme and a Poetry Spa Day and a Readers Day (as part of the Birmingham Literature Festival). We also facilitated 13 events for readers groups. The Librarians' Virtual Toolkit was attended by 680 attending or watching the YouTube recording of the event. We ran a training events programme for 60 participants.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Trustees adopted the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals during 2023-24. Consideration of the most appropriate goals for our work (for instance Justice, Education and Climate Crisis) are now included in development of all our work and are a standing item at all Sub-Committees and Board Meetings.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

FUTURE PLANS

In 2023/24 we began a new three-year National Portfolio Organisation funded programme with Arts Council England (subsequently extended to four years by Arts Council England, and so due to end in March 2028). The work funded by Arts Council England is largely development of previous work, across four main areas of work – Festival & Events, Writer Development, Young Writers and Reader Development. While Arts Council England funding has been at a standstill, funding from other sources has allowed us to expand our work with Children and Young People and, in 2024, to test some new areas of activity for the Birmingham Literature Festival.

The Birmingham Literature Festival will remain a significant project for Writing West Midlands, focussing on work of a high literary and intellectual merit. Our Birmingham International Literary Salon will continue as a monthly online event, featuring only writers from beyond the Anglosphere. We will continue to support the four regional networks (literary translators, university creative writing, literature festivals and independent publishers) through regular meetings and ongoing one-to-one advice and guidance.

Our work to support individual writers will continue, with our National Writers Conference, our Room 204 Writer Development Scheme and our one-to-one mentoring. As the National Writers Conference approaches maximum capacity (for the quality of experience we wish to offer), we will look to provide additional writer development support activities. Our Short Course and Workshop programme will continue, and we will look to continue to refresh the range presented. We will support other on-going writer development initiatives, including The Literacy Agency's free-read scheme.

Work with children and young people will remain our most important long-term focus. Having secured funding via two public library authorities (Staffordshire and Shropshire), we are now able to run 240 workshops per year through 24 Spark Young Writers Groups and will look to maintain this level across the next two years. To complement this activity, we will continue to publish our on-line creative writing magazine for young writers and run our second Celebratory Event for children involved and their families. We will increase investment in Our *Careers in Writing* event for young people aged 16 to 24, to encourage them to enter the writing industry.

Organisationally, we will continue to sustain our core offer across our region, while developing new initiatives where funding allows. We will develop sponsorship relationships, particularly those linked to the Birmingham Literature Festival. We will continue to pursue ways of supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Our various systems, including personnel and financial management and marketing, will be subject to continual development. We will continue to develop appropriate Customer Relationship Management systems for the organisation, which will help streamline how we communicate with many individuals and organisations. We will continue to recruit and train volunteers, particularly for our work with our Spark Young Writers Groups and our festivals and events.

With Arts Council England's current funding round for National Portfolio Organisations having been extended to March 2028, rather than begin an application for future funding, we will spend some of 2025/26 working with our Trustees, Staff and the various communities we serve to look at how our work might be developed from 2028 onwards, as far as 2040 (which would mark our fiftieth anniversary). This work will particularly focus on developing the Birmingham Literature Festival and our Spark Young Writers Groups programme.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

FINANCIAL REVIEW

A surplus of £25,496 (2024: deficit £9,894) was reported for the year. This increased total funds as at 31 March 2025, which now stand at £276,692 compared to £251,196 at the prior period end. The surplus was accounted for by unbudgeted bank interest on reserves, use of donations to offset cost of bursaries, higher than anticipated income pertaining to our Spark Young Writers Groups alongside lower than anticipated costs of our activities and lower than anticipated Employers National Insurance costs.

Reserves policy and risks
The Charity is constantly reviewing its cost base and implementing efficiencies with a view to maintaining liquid reserves to the equivalent of the level of annual funding from Arts Council England, a figure of £173K. The free reserves as at 31st March 2025 were £260,192, and therefore higher than currently recommended by the reserves policy.

Going Concern
The Trustees have reviewed the long-term viability of the Charity on a regular basis. With confirmation of Arts Council England funding from 2023-24 to 2026-27 and additional funding likely to be confirmed for their extension year of 2027-28, and with the currently high level of reserves, the Trustees feel confident that the Charity is a Going Concern with very modest risks over the next three years.

Risk management statement
The Trustees have continued to work on the development of its risk management strategy which has included an annual review of the risks that the charity may face using a Charity Commission checklist. Arts Council England, our main funder, consider Writing West Midlands to be a low-risk funded organisation. While the Trustees identified seven areas that have the potential for risk (Personnel, Governance, Artistic Programme & Policy, Delivery, Financial, Systems and Child Protection), risks pertaining to these areas are mostly hypothetical with work being undertaken to mitigate potential impact, as follows:

- Personnel – key staff are appropriately rewarded, good staff management processes are in place
- Governance – the Board and various Sub-Committees receive good information and are appropriately skilled
- Artistic Programme & Policy – artistic quality is monitored and constantly improved, particularly relating to serving diverse audiences/participants
- Delivery – venues are constantly assessed, marketing is regularly reviewed
- Financial – ongoing work to improve the likelihood of future funding, careful management of expenditure, new income streams being tested
- Systems – high-quality IT support being used to mitigate against failure of systems
- Child Protection – regular reviewing of policies and training of staff

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

Writing West Midlands Limited is a company limited by guarantee and was registered as a charity on 15 June 2012. The Charitable Company is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association which were adopted by the Board of Trustees on 13 March 2012.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Appointment of Trustees, induction & training

New Trustees are appointed by invitation to join the Board given that they have the necessary skills and experience to contribute to the Trust's activities and to be able to discharge their obligations as Trustees. Prospective new Trustees meet initially with the Chair and Chief Executive and are then invited to observe a meeting of the Board of Trustees, at which they are given all relevant papers, including financial reports. A document produced by the Charity Commission on the responsibilities of Trustees is also provided. Subject to the prospective Trustee and the Board of Trustees being in favour of membership a Resolution is issued and voted on at a Board Meeting. The two longest serving Trustees are required to submit themselves for re-election annually.

Trustees are encouraged to attend a range of our activities, including the Birmingham Literature Festival and our work with young writers. In addition to attending quarterly Board Meetings and an AGM, Trustees are required to join at least one of our sub-committees (Finance, Personnel, Artistic, Marketing, Contributed Income, Diversity and Young Writers). Trustees are asked to complete a Conflict-of-Interest Declaration.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees:
Ms Nikki Bi (Chair)
Professor Gregory Leadbetter
Ms Olwen Brown
Ms Maeve Clarke (resigned 6 November 2024)
Mr John Roberts (resigned 5 February 2025)
Mr George D Bastow
Dr Lisa Blower
Mr Robert Elkington
Ms Laura A Willis
Professor Thomas E Glave
Ms Sandra van Lente

Company Secretary:
vacant

Charity Number: 1147710

Company number: 06264124

Registered Office:
Studio 130, Zellig,
Gibb Street
Birmingham
B9 4AT

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Independent Examiner:
Karen Hanlan, ACA
Karen Hanlan Independent Examiner Ltd
1 Saracen Close
Ettington
CV37 7SZ

Bankers:
The Co-operative Bank p.l.c.
PO Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester
M60 4EP

Approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by:

Nikki Bi
Trustee

Date: 12/11/2025

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charitable company and of the surplus or deficit incurred by the charitable company for that year. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue to exist.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the charitable company has an appropriate system of controls, financial and otherwise.

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

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for

the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and to provide reasonable assurance that:

- the charitable company is operating efficiently and effectively;
- its assets are safeguarded against un-authorised use or disposition;
- proper records are maintained, and financial information used within the charity or for publication is reliable;
- the charitable company complies with relevant laws and regulations.

Statement of responsibilities

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Writing West Midlands Ltd ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2025 which are set out on pages 14 to 28.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3) the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4) the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

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

Karen Hanlan,
Member of Institute of Chartered Accountants England & Wales
Karen Hanlan Independent Examiner Ltd
1 Saracen Close
Ettington
Warwickshire
CV37 7SZ

Date: 12/11/2025

Statement of Financial Activities (including an Income & Expenditure Account)

	Note	Un-restricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total 2025	Total 2024
Income from:		**£**	**£**	**£**	£
Donations and legacies	1	**198,363**	**1,500**	**199,863**	199,754
Charitable Activities	2	**87,824**	**22,117**	**109,942**	59,839
Trading Activities	3	**7,200**	**-**	**7,200**	7,166
Investments – bank interest		**3,287**	**-**	**3,287**	1,726
Total income		**296,674**	**23,617**	**320,291**	268,485
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	4	**19,500**	**-**	**19,500**	20,630
Charitable activities	5	**251,678**	**23,617**	**275,295**	257,749
Total Expenditure		**271, 178**	**23,617**	**294,795**	278,379
Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds for year		**25,496**	**-**	**25,496**	(9,894)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		**251,196**	**-**	251,196	261,090
Total funds carried forward		**276,692**	**-**	**276,692**	251,196

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

Balance sheet

Company registered number 06264124	Notes	**2025**	2024
		£	£
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	9	**1,391**	1,998
Current Assets			
Debtors	10	**5,556**	9,001
Cash at bank and in hand		**282,517**	266,186
		288,073	275,187
Current Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	**(12,772)**	(25,989)
Net current assets		**275,301**	249,198
Net assets		**276,692**	251,196
The funds of the Charity:			
Restricted Funds	12	**-**	-
Unrestricted Funds	12		
- designated bursary fund		**6,500**	-
- designated research & development fund		**10,000**	-
- general funds		**260,192**	251,196
Total unrestricted funds		**276,692**	251,196
Total charity funds		**276,692**	251,196

The accompanying accounting policies and notes form part of these financial statements.

For the year ended 31 March 2025 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Responsibilities of directors/Trustees:

(a) The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006 - however, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 the financial statements have been examined by an independent examiner whose report appears on page 13.

(b) The directors/Trustees acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

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

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by: Date: 12/11/2025
Nikki Bi, Trustee

Principal accounting policies

Status of the company
The charitable company is limited by guarantee and does not have share capital. The liability of members is limited to £1 per member.

Basis of preparation
The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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 (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Writing West Midlands meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

Going concern statement
The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis which assumes that the Charitable Company will continue to operate. The validity of this assumption is dependent upon the continuance of support from the Charitable Company's key grant funder (Arts Council England), which was confirmed on 4th November 2022 with an announcement that regular funding would continue at the agreed level until March 2027, and in response to the progress made by the Charitable Company in pursuing a viable budget including the obtaining of further grants and other funds. The Charitable Company's current business plan shows that the Charitable Company will be able to operate in the foreseeable future. Based on this understanding, the directors believe that it remains appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. The financial statements do not include any adjustments, which would result from the basis of preparation being inappropriate.

Funds
Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations and grants subject to conditions imposed by the provider or by specific terms of the appeal under which the funds were raised. The restrictive conditions are binding upon the Charitable Company.

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

Income relating to future periods, as a result of donor imposed conditions specifying the time period, has been treated as deferred income.

Income dependent on certain conditions, amounting to more than mere administrative requirements, is recognised when the conditions have been fulfilled.

Principal accounting policies (continued)

Donated services and facilities
Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charitable company of the item is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP FRS102, general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charitable company which is the amount the charitable company would have been willing to pay to obtain the services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Interest receivable
Bank interest is shown on the basis of amounts receivable in the year.

Expenditure
Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charitable company to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds comprises the costs of staff time, publicity and other costs associated with raising income and includes an allocation of associated support & governance costs.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of festivals and events, Writer Development and Young Writers programmes undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support & governance costs.

Allocation of support costs
Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charitable company but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charities activities. These costs have been allocated between costs of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities and have been allocated based on the amount of time spent by staff on each area of activity.

Tangible fixed assets
Depreciation is provided at a rate calculated to write off the cost on a straight line basis over a period of less than the estimated useful life of the assets as follows:

Computer equipment, Office equipment & furniture	33% per annum

Fixed asset purchases above £500 are capitalised.

Cash and cash equivalents
Cash and cash equivalents include cash at bank and in hand and short term deposits repayable on within a three month notice period.

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

Principal accounting policies (continued)

Creditors
Creditors are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

Taxation
As a registered charity no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

Pension costs
The charity contributes into a Group Personal Pension Plan for employees. This pension plan is defined contribution in nature and as required under FRS102 the annual cost is recognised as incurred and included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Notes to the financial statements

1. Income from donations and legacies

	2025	2024
	£	£
Un-restricted:		
Arts Council England – National Portfolio Funding	**184,375**	184,375
Donations (Including Friends)	**858**	554
Gifts in kind	**13,130**	11,050
Total un-restricted grants & donations	**198,363**	195,979
Restricted grants:		
Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society	**-**	3,775
Grimmitt Trust	**1,500**	-
Total restricted grants	**1,500**	3,775
Total income from donations and legacies	**199,863**	199,754

Gifts in kind relate to donated facilities and services provided by other organisations to enable Writing West Midlands to carry out its activities. They comprise venue costs in relation to events and workshops.

2. Income from charitable activities

	2025	2024
Restricted grants:	£	£
Heart of England Foundation	**12,207**	1,666
Big Give Trust	**6,910**	-
Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society	**3,000**	-
Total restricted grants	**22,117**	1,666
Un-restricted income:		
Festivals & events	**14,756**	19,804
Writer development	**20,252**	12,954
Work with Young Writers & schools	**16,323**	13,393
Consultancy/project work	**27,668**	11,691
Bursaries in lieu of ticket sales	**8,615**	-
Other earned income	**210**	331
Total un-restricted income	**87,823**	58,173
Total income from Charitable Activities	**109,941**	59,839

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

3. Income from trading activities

Income from trading activities relates to sponsorship from organisations supporting the Birmingham Literature Festival and other events and workshops.

4. Analysis of expenditure on raising funds

	2025	2024
	£	£
Staff costs	**11,065**	12,007
Printing, publicity & marketing costs	**1,364**	1,142
Allocation of support costs	**5,939**	6,288
Allocation of governance costs	**1,132**	1,193
Total cost of raising funds	**19,500**	20,630

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

5. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	Festivals & Events	Writer development	Young Writers	2025 Total
	£	£	£	£
Direct operating and programming costs	22,767	17,601	42,798	**83,166**
Bursaries	250	5,600	1,690	**7,540**
Marketing, printing & publicity	19,099	2,728	4,093	**25,920**
Staff costs	41,318	21,622	33,866	**96,806**
Support costs	22,177	11,606	18,177	**51,960**
Governance costs	4,227	2,212	3,464	**9,903**
Total 2024/25	**109,838**	**61,369**	**104,088**	**275,295**

Expenditure on charitable activities includes £251,678(2024: £252,308) relating to un-restricted funds and £23,617 (2024: £5,441) relating to restricted funds. Direct operating and programming costs includes gifts in kind of £13,130 (2024 £11,050) in relation to venues provided for Young Writers Groups, the conference and summer schools free of charge.
Support & governance costs have been allocated across activity categories in accordance with time spent by staff in those areas.

	Festivals & Events	Writer development	Young Writers	2024 Total
	£	£	£	£
Direct operating and programming costs	19,356	12,926	32,137	**64,419**
Bursaries	420	1,895	2,085	**4,400**
Marketing, printing & publicity	15,992	2,284	3,427	**21,703**
Staff costs	48,318	20,508	34,206	**103,032**
Support costs	25,304	10,740	17,913	**53,957**
Governance costs	4,801	2,038	3,399	**10,238**
Total 2023/24	**114,191**	**50,391**	**93,167**	**257,749**

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

6. Analysis of support and governance costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2025 Total
	£	£	£
Staff costs	**19,111**	**9,001**	**28,112**
Staff training, travel & subsistence	**4,422**	**-**	**4,422**
Office costs	**33,244**	**-**	**33,244**
Depreciation	**1,122**	**-**	**1,122**
Legal & professional fees	**-**	**34**	**34**
Independent Examiners fees (including accountancy)	**-**	**2,000**	**2,000**
Total 2024/25	**57,899**	**11,035**	**68,934**

	Support costs	Governance costs	2024 Total
	£	£	£
Staff costs	**18,931**	**9,382**	**28,313**
Staff training, travel & subsistence	**2,874**	**-**	**2,874**
Office costs	**36,578**	**-**	**36,578**
Depreciation	**1,862**	**-**	**1,862**
Legal & professional fees	**-**	**13**	**13**
Independent Examiners fees (including accountancy)	**-**	**2,000**	**2,000**
Trustee meeting costs	**-**	**36**	**36**
Total 2023/24	**60,245**	**11,431**	**71,676**

7. Net income for the year

	2025	2024
Net income for the year is stated after charging:	**£**	£
Depreciation	**1,122**	1,862
Independent examiners fees -		
Independent examination	**1,500**	1,500
Accountancy services	**500**	500

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

8. Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses

	2025	2024
	£	£
Salaries	**127,691**	134,589
National Insurance	**5,023**	5,518
Pension	**3,269**	3,245
Total	**135,983**	143,352

Staff Numbers

	Number	Number
Average number of full-time equivalent excluding Trustees	3.6	3.6

No employees had employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2024: nil).

The charitable company's trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year, other than that noted in note 14 on page 27. No Trustee expenses were reimbursed during the year (2024: £nil).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive. Trustees receive no remuneration or other benefits from the charity. The remuneration of key management personnel (excluding pension contributions) for the year was £41,153 (2024: £41,465).

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

9. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer Equipment £	Furniture, Fixture, & Fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At beginning of year	18,533	1,615	20,148
Additions	515	-	515
At end of year	19,048	1,615	20,663
Depreciation			
At beginning of year	16,535	1,615	18,150
Charge for the year	1,122	-	1,122
At end of year	17,657	1,615	19,272
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2025	**1,391**	**-**	**1,391**
At 31 March 2024	1,998	-	1,998

10. Debtors

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade debtors	**852**	1,500
Other debtors	**2,880**	2,880
Prepayments	**1,824**	1,858
Accrued income	**-**	2,763
	5,556	9,001

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade creditors	**1,360**	2,012
Taxation and social security	**2,589**	3,897
Deferred income	**4,351**	16,962
Accruals	**4,472**	3,118
	12,772	25,989

Deferred income:	**2025**	2024
	£	£
Balance brought forward	**16,962**	3,269
Transferred to statement of financial activities	**(16,962)**	(3,269)
Deferred in year	**4,351**	16,962
Balance at end of year	**4,351**	16,962

Deferred income relates to grants and fees received in advance of the period to which they relate.

12. Funds

2024/25	Balance at beginning of year £	**Income £**	**Expenditure £**	**Transfers £**	**Balance at end of year £**
Restricted funds					
Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society	-	3,000	(3,000)	**-**	**-**
Grimmitt Trust	-	1,500	(1,500)	**-**	**-**
The Big Give Trust	-	6,910	(6,910)	**-**	**-**
Heart of England – United by 2022	-	12,207	(12,207)	**-**	**-**
	-	23,617	(23,617)	**-**	**-**
Unrestricted funds					
Bursary fund	-	-	-	**6,500**	**6,500**
Research & development fund	-	-	-	**10,000**	**10,000**
General fund	251,196	296,674	(271,178)	**(16,500)**	**260,192**
Total	251,196	320,291	(294,795)	**-**	**276,692**

Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society – Funding received to support the Literature Festival.
Grimmitt Trust - Funding received to support Sparks Young Writers Groups.
The Big Give Trust – Match funding received to support the Bursary fund.
Heart of England - United by 2022 (specifically their Inclusive Communities Fund) – Funding received to support an additional Spark Young Writers Group in Birmingham, training for writers working on our Spark Young Writers Programme, a Celebratory Event for this Programme and delivery of online and public library events as part of the Birmingham Literature Festival in 2024.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

2023/24	Balance at beginning of year £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at end of year £
Restricted funds					
Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society	-	3,775	(3,775)	-	-
Heart of England – United by 2022	-	1,666	(1,666)	-	-
	-	5,441	(5,441)	-	-
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	261,090	263,044	(272,938)	-	**251,196**
Total	261,090	268,485	(278,379)	-	**251,196**

13. Analysis of net assets between funds

2024/25	Un-restricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Fixed assets	**1,391**	**-**	**1,391**
Debtors	**5,556**	**-**	**5,556**
Cash at bank and in hand	**282,517**	**-**	**282,517**
Creditors	**(12,772)**	**-**	**(12,772)**
Funds	**276,692**	**-**	**276,692**

2023/24	Un-restricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Fixed assets	1,998	-	1,998
Debtors	9,001	-	9,001
Cash at bank and in hand	266,186	-	266,186
Creditors	(25,989)	-	(25,989)
Funds	251,196	-	251,196

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

14. Related party transactions

Fees & expenses were paid to two Trustees (2024: None) for fees and expenses in relation to the Literature Festivals follows:

T Glave	£678
S van Lente	£161.36

Midland Creative Projects Limited, a Company owned and controlled by the Chief Executive, received total expenses of £996.83 (2024: £1,289.69) relating to expenditure incurred on behalf of Writing West Midlands.

The Articles of Association allow payments to Trustees for the supply of services in connection with the charitable company's charitable activities.

15. Operating lease commitments

The total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows	**2025**	2024
Expiring:	**£**	£
- Within one year	**-**	-
- Between two and five years	**-**	-

16. Controlling Interests

The charity is controlled by the Trustees.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

17. Prior year comparative Statement of Financial Activities

	Un-restricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total 2024
Income from:	**£**	**£**	**£**
Donations and legacies	**195,979**	**3,775**	**199,754**
Charitable Activities	**58,173**	**1,666**	**59,839**
Trading Activities	**7,166**	**-**	**7,166**
Investments – bank interest	**1,726**	**-**	**1,726**
Total income	**263,044**	**5,441**	**268,485**
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	**20,630**	**-**	**20,630**
Charitable activities	**252,308**	**5,441**	**257,749**
Total Expenditure	**272,938**	**5,441**	**278,379**
Net expenditure and net movement in funds for year	**(9,894)**	**-**	**(9,894)**
Reconciliation of funds			
Total funds brought forward	261,090	-	261,090
Transfer of funds	-	-	-
Total funds carried forward	**251,196**	**-**	**251,196**

WRITING WEST MIDLANDS LTD

England & Wales - Charity number 1147710

Accounts

Writing West Midlands Ltd

(a Company Limited by Guarantee)

Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Registered Company number 06264124

Registered Charity number 1147710

Writing West Midlands Ltd
Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 March 2024

Index

	Page
Report of the Trustees	3-11
Statement of Trustees responsibilities	12
Report of the independent examiner	13
Statement of financial activities (incorporating an Income & Expenditure Account)	14
Balance sheet	15
Principal Accounting Policies	16-18
Notes to the financial statements	19-28

Report of the Trustees

The directors of Writing West Midlands Ltd ("the charitable company") are its Trustees for the purpose of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as its Trustees. The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, 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 (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019).

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting the charitable company's report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The objects of the Charity, as set out in its Memorandum and Articles of Association, are to advance education in the arts for the public benefit by promotion of creative writing, in particular but not exclusively in the UK's West Midlands region.

To achieve these objects Writing West Midlands has a series of **Objectives**, as follows:

Workforce/Talent Development - Workforce/Talent Development activities develop the skills and talents of creative writers in all genres and forms.

Artform/Sector Development - Artform/Sector Development activities challenge and support the literature sector to develop the highest quality of creative writing.

Participation/Market Development - Participation/Market Development activities encourage emerging and established writers to participate in opportunities created or signposted.

Audience/Readership Development - Audience/Readership Development activities develop audiences/readers for new writers and their work.

Young People Engagement - Young People Engagement activities offer children and young people the opportunity to develop as creative writers.

Regional Development - Regional Development activities promote writing in the West Midlands in partnership with national and international organisations.

National/International Development - National and International Development activities develop the national offer for literature development and create opportunities for our writers to work beyond the UK.

Organisational Development - Organisational Development activities improve the way we run our organisation, including developing staff, volunteers and our Board of Trustees.

Our pursuit of these **Objectives** is informed by our commitment to Arts Council England's Let's Create Strategy and its Investment Principles. **Objectives** are delivered through activities across four main areas of work, along with work to support our Governance, Management and Organisational Development. These four areas of work and their activities are as follows:

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Writer Development

We support emerging and established writers with a programme of events and activities. This includes our annual writer networking conference (The National Writers' Conference), our Room 204 Writer Development Scheme and regular one-to-one advice and guidance sessions. We offer universities bespoke Creative Writing Career Seminars for their students.

We run a year-round programme of writing workshops and short-courses and other creative writing activities. We work with other organisations, for instance The Commonwealth Games, to create creative opportunities for writers. We make links with writing communities outside the UK to develop opportunities for writers in our region. We also run regional networks of university creative writing courses, literary translators and independent literary publishers.

Young Writers

We work with children and young people to develop their interest in creative writing, largely through out of school activities but also with schools. This includes running our network of Spark Young Writers' Groups, publishing an online creative writing magazine for young writers and running our Young Writers Toolkit (offering advice for young people about the writing industry).

Festival & Events

We develop audiences/readers for emerging and established writers and their work. This focuses on our Birmingham Literature Festival. We run a regional network of literature festival producers and provide on-going advice and guidance to other event organisers.

Reader Development

We manage the West Midlands Readers' Network, an Arts Council England funded project that works with readers groups, public libraries and independent bookshops to provide support for 'creative reading'. This includes an annual online conference for public library and independent bookshop staff, a short story commissioning programme and an events programme for readers groups.

Governance, Management & Organisational Development

We work constantly to improve the ways in which our organisation is governed, managed and organised. This includes offering training for staff, for volunteers and for our Board of Trustees, regular updating of our policies and financial management and IT management systems. Much governance is managed through our Finance & Resources, Personnel, Diversity, Contributed Income, Communications, Artistic Policy and Young Writers Sub-Committees.

When reviewing and planning activities over the year, Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'. To broaden access and achieve our stated aims, we set costs of attendance and participation at the lowest possible level and offer many events, activities and services at no cost. We offer Bursary places across all our events and activities for those who are economically marginalised. We adopted the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and will use these to guide our work.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Writer Development

Our Writer Development work continued to focus on emerging writers requiring a range of support to develop and sustain their creative careers, but also included working with established writers who found themselves increasingly in need of similar support. This work included on-going sign-posting through social media, public events, training and one to one mentoring for those on our Room 204 Writer Development Scheme and for others.

Room 204 Writer Development Programme & One to One Mentoring

A further 15 emerging or established writers joined our Room 204 Writer Development Programme in 2023, selected from 123 applications, bringing the membership up to 185, including people from all 14 West Midlands local authority areas in the region. The Programme offered workshops, one to one career mentoring and free entrance to our 2024 National Writers Conference (for those newly joined). Room 204 Exchanges were introduced, being a monthly one hour sharing online of skills knowledge and by a Room 204 writer for other Room 204 writers. Quarterly in-person Room 204 meet-ups continued.

Existing participants in the Room 204 Programme continued to receive one to one mentoring. Our Chief Executive continued to contact Room 204 writers from early cohorts, offering additional one to one time. The Room 204 Programme is unique in offering permanent and ongoing support to those who are selected to join. 100% of those on the Programme indicated a satisfaction level of good or excellent. One to one mentoring on all aspects of the writing industry was also offered to other writers and literature professionals and, including one to ones with Room 204 writers, a total of 103 sessions were delivered during the year.

We continued to run a paid for mentoring programme for the regional publisher Nine Arches Press and offered smaller scale and un-costed support for other independent publishers and other literature development organisations in the region.

National Writers Conference, Short Courses & Workshops

Our annual National Writers Conference was hosted by University of Birmingham, with a highest ever booking/attendance figure of 209. Our programme of short courses and workshops continued, largely online and with some in-person workshops run as part of the Birmingham Literature Festival. A total of 702 people attended 59 training sessions and 997 hours of training was provided. The satisfaction level for our short courses, workshops and the National Writers Conference was 100% good or excellent.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Other Writer Development Initiatives

We continued to provide mentoring for the Birmingham Poet Laureate 2022 – 24 (Jasmin Gardosi) and during the year agreed to take over overall management of both the Birmingham Poet Laureate and Birmingham Young Poet Laureate from July 2024 onwards. We continued to support the Coventry Poet Laureate 2021 – 2023 (Emilie Lauren Jones) and assisted in the recruitment of the Coventry Poet Laureate 2023 – 2025 (John Bernard) and the Coventry Young Poet Laureate 2023 – 2025 (Aamani Kanda).

We managed regional recruitment for writers from disadvantaged backgrounds to receive critical readings ('free reads') of creative writing through The Literacy Consultancy. We ran six Regional Writer Meet-Ups to introduce our work to emerging writers across the region. We managed regional Universities Creative Writing, Literary Translators and Independent Publishers Networks, the latter including some Independent Booksellers. On two separate occasions, Writing West Midlands organised a tour of independent bookshops for The Guardian newspaper and ACE colleagues. The former resulted in an article in The Guardian newspaper.

We continued to support our Keele University and Birmingham City University Collaborative Doctoral Research Students as they worked on their PhDs. We successfully drafted and applied for funding from Arts Council England for the JAAG Festival in Birmingham (which took place in July 2024, so beyond the scope of this report).

Young Writers

Activities with Young Writers reverted to largely being delivered in person, although we maintained three on-line Spark Young Writers Groups. Our work with young writers from age 8 upwards continued to be central to a significant element of our programme of activities. Most of this work was delivered through our Spark Young Writers Programme.

Spark Young Writers Groups

The number of Spark Young Writers Groups increased to 21, with three of these being online and the rest being in various locations across the region. Satisfaction rates for these groups (good or excellent) reached 91%. Some Spark Young Writers Groups were partly supported by funds received from the Inclusive Communities Fund (a legacy of the Birmingham Commonwealth Games managed by the Heart of England Foundation) and by National Lottery Project Grants submitted on behalf of Staffordshire and Shropshire Library Services.

Publications & Other Activities

We published two online editions of our Spark Young Writers Magazine, professionally edited and with contributions from young writers across the region and we published one hardcopy Spark Young Writers Anthology.

Summary of Young Writers Provision

In total, we offered 192 training sessions and 2699 hours of engagement. Attenders at our activities for young writers numbered 1346 and came from 24 local authority areas, including all West Midlands areas and some local authority areas beyond the West Midlands.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Festivals & Events

Birmingham Literature Festival

The Birmingham Literature Festival was presented as a four day in-person event in October, based at the Birmingham Rep and also using The Exchange and The Roundhouse as venues. Our programme was an eclectic mixture of talks, discussions, performances and workshops, focussing on high quality writing. The Festival included an event for schools featuring local writer Sir Lenny Henry, as well as many other poets, fiction writers and writers of narrative non-fiction.

Satisfaction rates for the Birmingham Literature Festival (good or excellent) reached 98%. A total of 27 events and workshops were presented, with 3,468 tickets sold/taken. We earned more ticket income and Festival sponsorship than budgeted and spent less on Festival delivery than budgeted. The Festival included the West Midlands Readers' Network *Readers' Day* as a closing event.

Year-Round Events

Our Birmingham International Literary Salon continued to present a monthly online discussion event with writers from beyond the Anglosphere, attracting between 15 and 20 participants upon each occasion. Guests included writers from Italy, Peshawar (India), France, Côte d'Ivoire, The Basque Country, Chile and Jamaica.

Reader Development

Our Reader Development work focussed on our management of the West Midlands Readers' Network, using National Lottery Project Grant funding from Arts Council England to run a programme of work from April 2023 until March 2024.

The programme of work included a short story commissioning scheme with readers groups, an online day conference for public library staff on reader development (the *Librarians' Virtual Toolkit*), two Reading Spas, one reader in residence programme and a Poetry Spa Day and a Readers Day (as part of the Birmingham Literature Festival). We also facilitated eight events for readers groups.

The Librarians' Virtual Toolkit was attended by 122 people with an additional 245 watching the YouTube recording of the event. Satisfaction rate (good or excellent) for the Readers Day was 93%.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Trustees adopted the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals during 2023-24. Consideration of the most appropriate goals for our work (for instance Justice, Education and Climate Crisis) are now included in development of all our work and are a standing item at all Sub-Committees and Board Meetings.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

FUTURE PLANS

In 2023/24 we began a new three-year National Portfolio Organisation funded programme with Arts Council England (subsequently extended to four years by Arts Council England). The work funded is a development of previous work, across four main areas of work – Festival & Events, Writer Development, Young Writers and Reader Development. With Arts Council England funding being given at standstill, some small reductions in work have been required.

The Birmingham Literature Festival remains a flag-ship development project. Our Birmingham International Literary Salon will continue as a monthly online event. We will continue to support the four regional networks (literary translators, university creative writing, literature festivals and independent publishers) and will look to develop our international work, for instance by inviting writers from mainland Europe to attend our Festival in ways that do not unduly increase our CO2 impact.

Our work to support individual writers will continue, with our National Writers Conference, our Room 204 Writer Development Scheme and our one-to-one mentoring. Our Short Course and Workshop programme will continue, and we will look to continue to refresh the range presented. We will support other on-going writer development initiatives, including The Literacy Agency's free-read scheme and a new residency in Belfast with which we have been invited to participate.

Work with children and young people will remain our most important long-term focus. We will bring our programme of Spark Young Writers Groups back up to 24 groups, with three remaining permanently online. We will present a day event, *Careers in Words,* for young people aged 16 to 24, to encourage them to enter the writing industry. We will continue to publish our on-line creative writing magazine for young writers.

Organisationally, we will continue to sustain our core offer across our region, while developing new initiatives where funding allows. We will develop sponsorship relationships, particularly those linked to the Birmingham Literature Festival. We will continue to pursue ways of supporting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Our various systems, including personnel and financial management and marketing, will be subject to continual development. We will continue to develop appropriate Customer Relationship Management systems for the organisation, which will help streamline how we communicate with many individuals and organisations. We will continue to recruit and train volunteers, particularly for our work with our Spark Young Writers Groups and our festivals and events.

We will begin planning for work to take place from 2027 to 2030, anticipating the opportunity to apply for Arts Council England funding alongside contributed income and earned income. This work will particularly focus on developing the Birmingham Literature Festival and our Spark Young Writers Groups programme.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

FINANCIAL REVIEW

A deficit of £9,894 (2023: surplus £6,367) was reported for the year. This decreased total funds as at 31 March 2024, which now stand at £251,196 compared to £261,090 at the prior period end. The deficit was accounted for by planned use of reserves, including the commissioning of a research report into our work with young writers, one off cost-of-living payments to all staff (excluding the Chief Executive) and temporary increased staffing to cover additional fundraising.

Reserves policy and risks
The Charity is constantly reviewing its cost base and implementing efficiencies with a view to maintaining liquid reserves to the equivalent of the level of annual funding from Arts Council England, a figure of £184K. The free reserves as at 31 March 2024 were £249,198, and therefore higher than currently recommended by the reserves policy. The Finance & Resources Sub-Committee will propose a new Reserves Policy during 2024-25.

Going Concern
The Trustees have reviewed the long-term viability of the Charity on a regular basis. With confirmation of Arts Council England funding from 2023-24 to 2026-27 – albeit at standstill levels – and with the currently high level of reserves, the Trustees feel confident that the Charity is a Going Concern with very modest risks over the next three years.

Risk management statement
The Trustees have continued to work on the development of its risk management strategy which has included an annual review of the risks that the charity may face using a Charity Commission checklist. Arts Council England, our main funder, consider Writing West Midlands to be a low-risk funded organisation. While the Trustees identified seven areas that have the potential for risk (Personnel, Governance, Artistic Programme & Policy, Delivery, Financial, Systems and Child Protection), risks pertaining to these areas are mostly hypothetical with work being undertaken to mitigate potential impact, as follows:

- Personnel – key staff are appropriately rewarded, good staff management processes are in place
- Governance – the Board and various Sub-Committees receive good information and are appropriately skilled
- Artistic Programme & Policy – artistic quality is monitored and constantly improved, particularly relating to serving a diverse audiences/participants
- Delivery – venues are constantly assessed, marketing is regularly reviewed
- Financial – ongoing work to improve the likelihood of future funding, careful management of expenditure, new income streams being tested
- Systems – high-quality IT support being used to mitigate against failure of systems
- Child Protection – regular reviewing of policies and training of staff

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

Writing West Midlands Limited is a company limited by guarantee and was registered as a charity on 15 June 2012. The Charitable Company is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association which were adopted by the Board of Trustees on 13 March 2012.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Appointment of Trustees, induction & training

New Trustees are appointed by invitation to join the Board given that they have the necessary skills and experience to contribute to the Trust's activities and to be able to discharge their obligations as Trustees. Prospective new Trustees meet initially with the Chair and Chief Executive and are then invited to observe a meeting of the Board of Trustees, at which they are given all relevant papers, including financial reports. A document produced by the Charity Commission on the responsibilities of Trustees is also provided. Subject to the prospective Trustee and the Board of Trustees being in favour of membership a Resolution is issued and voted on at a Board Meeting. The two longest serving Trustees are required to submit themselves for re-election annually.

Trustees are encouraged to attend a range of our activities, including the Birmingham Literature Festival and our work with young writers. In addition to attending quarterly Board Meetings and an AGM, Trustees are required to join at least one of our sub-committees (Finance, Personnel, Artistic, Marketing, Contributed Income, Diversity and Young Writers). Trustees are asked to complete a Conflict-of-Interest Declaration.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees:
Ms Nikki Bi (Chair)
Professor Gregory Leadbetter
Ms Olwen Brown
Ms Maeve Clarke
Mr John Roberts
Mr George D Bastow
Dr Lisa Blower
Mr Robert Elkington
Ms Laura A Willis
Professor Thomas E Glave
Ms Sandra van Lente

Company Secretary:
vacant

Charity Number: 1147710

Company number: 06264124

Registered Office:
Studio 130, Zellig,
Gibb Street
Birmingham
B9 4AT

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Independent Examiner:
Karen Hanlan, ACA
Karen Hanlan Independent Examiner Ltd
1 Saracen Close
Ettington
CV37 7SZ

Bankers:
The Co-operative Bank p.l.c.
PO Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester
M60 4EP

Approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by:

Nikki Bi
Trustee

Date: 20/11/24

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charitable company and of the surplus or deficit incurred by the charitable company for that year. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue to exist.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the charitable company has an appropriate system of controls, financial and otherwise.

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

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for

the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and to provide reasonable assurance that:

- the charitable company is operating efficiently and effectively;
- its assets are safeguarded against un-authorised use or disposition;
- proper records are maintained, and financial information used within the charity or for publication is reliable;
- the charitable company complies with relevant laws and regulations.

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Writing West Midlands Ltd ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2024 which are set out on pages 14 to 28.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3) the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4) the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

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

Karen Hanlan, Date: 20/11/24
Member of Institute of Chartered Accountants England & Wales
Karen Hanlan Independent Examiner Ltd
1 Saracen Close
Ettington
Warwickshire
CV37 7SZ

Statement of Financial Activities (including an Income & Expenditure Account)

		Un-restricted funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total 2024	Total 2023
Income from:	**Note**	**£**	**£**	**£**	£
Donations and legacies	1	**195,979**	**3,775**	**199,754**	197,371
Charitable Activities	2	**58,173**	**1,666**	**59,839**	147,411
Trading Activities	3	**7,166**	**-**	**7,166**	3,500
Investments – bank interest		**1,726**	**-**	**1,726**	517
Total income		**263,044**	**5,441**	**268,485**	348,799
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	4	**20,630**	**-**	**20,630**	20,171
Charitable activities	5	**252,308**	**5,441**	**257,749**	322,261
Total Expenditure		**272,938**	**5,441**	**278,379**	342,432
Net (expenditure)/ income and net movement in funds for year		**(9,894)**	**-**	**(9,894)**	6,367
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		261,090	-	261,090	254,723
Transfer of funds		-	-	-	-
Total funds carried forward		**251,196**	**-**	**251,196**	261,090

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

Balance sheet

Company registered number 06264124	Notes	2024	2023
		£	£
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	9	**1,998**	3,860
Current Assets			
Debtors	10	**9,001**	27,084
Cash at bank and in hand		**266,186**	254,023
		275,187	281,107
Current Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	**(25,989)**	(23,877)
Net current assets		**249,198**	257,230
Net assets		**251,196**	261,090
The funds of the Charity:			
Restricted Funds	12	**-**	-
Unrestricted Funds	12	**251,196**	261,090
Total charity funds		**251,196**	261,090

The accompanying accounting policies and notes form part of these financial statements.

For the year ended 31 March 2024 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Responsibilities of directors/Trustees:

(a) The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006 - however, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 the financial statements have been examined by an independent examiner whose report appears on page 13.

(b) The directors/Trustees acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

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

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by: Date: 20/12/24
Nikki Bi, Trustee

Principal accounting policies

Status of the company
The charitable company is limited by guarantee and does not have share capital. The liability of members is limited to £1 per member.

Basis of preparation
The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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 (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Writing West Midlands meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

Going concern statement
The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis which assumes that the Charitable Company will continue to operate. The validity of this assumption is dependent upon the continuance of support from the Charitable Company's key grant funder (Arts Council England), which was confirmed on 4th November 2022 with an announcement that regular funding would continue at the agreed level until March 2027, and in response to the progress made by the Charitable Company in pursuing a viable budget including the obtaining of further grants and other funds. The Charitable Company's current business plan shows that the Charitable Company will be able to operate in the foreseeable future. Based on this understanding, the directors believe that it remains appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. The financial statements do not include any adjustments, which would result from the basis of preparation being inappropriate.

Funds
Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations and grants subject to conditions imposed by the provider or by specific terms of the appeal under which the funds were raised. The restrictive conditions are binding upon the Charitable Company.

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

Income relating to future periods, as a result of donor imposed conditions specifying the time period, has been treated as deferred income.

Income dependent on certain conditions, amounting to more than mere administrative requirements, is recognised when the conditions have been fulfilled.

Principal accounting policies (continued)

Donated services and facilities
Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charitable company of the item is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP FRS102, general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charitable company which is the amount the charitable company would have been willing to pay to obtain the services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Interest receivable
Bank interest is shown on the basis of amounts receivable in the year.

Expenditure
Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charitable company to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds comprises the costs of staff time, publicity and other costs associated with raising income and includes an allocation of associated support & governance costs.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of festivals and events, Writer Development and Young Writers programmes undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support & governance costs.

Allocation of support costs
Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charitable company but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charities activities. These costs have been allocated between costs of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities and have been allocated based on the amount of time spent by staff on each area of activity.

Tangible fixed assets
Depreciation is provided at a rate calculated to write off the cost on a straight line basis over a period of less than the estimated useful life of the assets as follows:

Computer equipment, Office equipment & furniture	33% per annum

Fixed asset purchases above £500 are capitalised.

Cash and cash equivalents
Cash and cash equivalents include cash at bank and in hand and short term deposits repayable on within a three month notice period.

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

Principal accounting policies (continued)

Creditors
Creditors are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

Taxation
As a registered charity no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

Pension costs
The charity contributes into a Group Personal Pension Plan for employees. This pension plan is defined contribution in nature and as required under FRS102 the annual cost is recognised as incurred and included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Notes to the financial statements

1. Income from donations and legacies

	2024	2023
	£	£
Un-restricted:		
Arts Council England – National Portfolio Funding	**184,375**	184,375
Donations (Including Friends)	**554**	496
Gifts in kind	**11,050**	8,725
Total un-restricted grants & donations	**195,979**	193,596
Restricted grants:		
Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society	**3,775**	3,775
Total restricted grants	**3,775**	3,775
Total income from donations and legacies	**199,754**	197,371

Gifts in kind relate to donated facilities and services provided by other organisations to enable Writing West Midlands to carry out its activities. They comprise venue costs in relation to events and workshops.

2. Income from charitable activities

	2024	2023
Restricted grants:	**£**	£
Coventry City of Culture	**-**	38,535
Birmingham City Council – Commonwealth Games Project	**-**	11,470
Heart of England Foundation	**1,666**	-
Total restricted grants	**1,666**	50,005
Un-restricted income:		
Festivals & events	**19,804**	20,197
Writer development	**12,954**	13,342
Work with Young Writers & schools	**13,393**	44,136
Other earned income	**12,022**	19,731
Total un-restricted income	**58,173**	97,406
Total income from Charitable Activities	**59,839**	147,411

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

3. Income from trading activities

Income from trading activities relates to sponsorship from organisations supporting the Birmingham Literature Festival and other events and workshops.

4. Analysis of expenditure on raising funds

	2024	2023
	£	£
Staff costs	**12,007**	12,059
Printing, publicity & marketing costs	**1,142**	1,111
Allocation of support costs	**6,288**	5,739
Allocation of governance costs	**1,193**	1,262
Total cost of raising funds	**20,630**	20,171

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

5. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	Festivals & Events	Writer development	Young Writers	2024 Total
	£	£	£	£
Direct operating and programming costs	19,356	12,926	32,137	**64,419**
Bursaries	420	1,895	2,085	**4,400**
Marketing, printing & publicity	15,992	2,284	3,427	**21,703**
Staff costs	48,318	20,508	34,206	**103,032**
Support costs	25,304	10,740	17,913	**53,957**
Governance costs	4,801	2,038	3,399	**10,238**
Total 2023/24	**114,191**	**50,391**	**93,167**	**257,749**

Expenditure on charitable activities includes £252,308(2023: £263,391) relating to un-restricted funds and £5,441 (2023: £58,870) relating to restricted funds. Direct operating and programming costs includes gifts in kind of £11,050 (2023 £8,725) in relation to venues provided for Young Writers Groups, the conference and summer schools free of charge. Support & governance costs have been allocated across activity categories in accordance with time spent by staff in those areas.

	Festivals & Events	Writer development	Young Writers	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£
Direct operating and programming costs	37,888	20,958	46,694	**105,540**
Coventry City of Culture Contains Strong Language Festival	34,024	-	-	**34,024**
Bursaries	-	2,034	1,477	**3,511**
Marketing, printing & publicity	15,548	2,221	3,333	**21,102**
Staff costs	41,774	19,803	38,437	**100,014**
Support costs	19,883	9,426	18,295	**47,604**
Governance costs	4,372	2,072	4,022	**10,466**
Total 2022/23	**153,489**	**56,514**	**112,258**	**322,261**

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

6. Analysis of support and governance costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2024 Total
	£	**£**	**£**
Staff costs	**18,931**	**9,382**	**28,313**
Staff training, travel & subsistence	**2,874**	**-**	**2,874**
Office costs	**36,578**	**-**	**36,578**
Depreciation	**1,862**	**-**	**1,862**
Legal & professional fees	**-**	**13**	**13**
Independent Examiners fees (including accountancy)	**-**	**2,000**	**2,000**
Trustee meeting costs	**-**	**36**	**36**
Total 2023/24	**60,245**	**11,431**	**71,676**

	Support costs	Governance costs	2023 Total
	£	**£**	**£**
Staff costs	18,050	9,215	27,265
Staff training, travel & subsistence	2,534	-	2,534
Office costs	31,536	-	31,536
Depreciation	1,223	-	1,223
Legal & professional fees	-	13	13
Independent Examiners fees	-	2,500	2,500
Total 2022/23	53,343	11,728	65,071

7. Net income for the year

	2024	2023
Net income for the year is stated after charging:	**£**	£
Depreciation	**1,862**	1,223
Independent examiners fees -		
Independent examination	**1,500**	1,350
Accountancy services	**500**	1,150

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

8. Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses

	2024	2023
	£	£
Salaries	**134,589**	130,472
National Insurance	**5,518**	5,852
Pension	**3,245**	3,014
Total	**143,352**	139,338

Staff Numbers

	Number	Number
Average number of full-time equivalent excluding Trustees	3.6	3.7

No employees had employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2023: nil).

The charitable company's trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year, other than that noted in note 14 on page 27. No Trustee expenses were reimbursed during the year (2023: £nil).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive. Trustees receive no remuneration or other benefits from the charity. The remuneration of key management personnel (excluding pension contributions) for the year was £41,465 (2023: £39,193).

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

9. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer Equipment £	Furniture, Fixture, & Fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At beginning of year	18,533	1,615	20,148
Additions	-	-	-
At end of year	18,533	1,615	20,148
Depreciation			
At beginning of year	14,673	1,615	16,288
Charge for the year	1,862	-	1,862
At end of year	16,535	1,615	18,150
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2024	**1,998**	**-**	**1,998**
At 31 March 2023	3,860	-	3,860

10. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade debtors	**1,500**	3,576
Other debtors	**2,880**	2,880
Prepayments	**1,858**	2,558
Accrued income	**2,763**	18,070
	9,001	27,084

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade creditors	**2,012**	3,453
Taxation and social security	**3,897**	8,615
Deferred income	**16,962**	3,269
Accruals	**3,118**	8,540
	25,989	23,877

Deferred income:	**2024**	2023
	£	£
Balance brought forward	**3,269**	27,698
Transferred to statement of financial activities	**(3,269)**	(27,698)
Deferred in year	**16,962**	3,269
Balance at end of year	**16,962**	3,269

Deferred income relates to grants and fees received in advance of the period to which they relate.

12. Funds

2023/24	Balance at beginning of year £	**Income £**	**Expenditure £**	**Transfers £**	**Balance at end of year £**
Restricted funds					
Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society	-	3,775	(3,775)	**-**	**-**
Heart of England – United by 2022	-	1,666	(1,666)	**-**	**-**
	-	5,441	(5,441)	**-**	**-**
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	261,090	263,044	(272,938)	**-**	**251,196**
Total	261,090	268,485	(278,379)	**-**	**251,196**

Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society – Funding received to support attendance at the National Writers Conference for Room 204 participants, and for costs associated with the National Writers Conference and the Careers in Writing Day.

Heart of England - United by 2022 (specifically their Inclusive Communities Fund) – Funding received to support an additional Spark Young Writers Group in Birmingham, training for writers working on our Spark Young Writers Programme, a Celebratory Event for this Programme and delivery of online and public library events as part of the Birmingham Literature Festival.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

2022/23	Balance at beginning of year £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at end of year £
Restricted funds					
Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society	-	3,775	(3,775)	-	-
Contains Strong Language Festival	5,431	38,535	(43,966)	-	-
Commonwealth Game Project	-	11,470	(11,129)	(341)	-
	5,431	53,780	(58,870)	(341)	-
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	249,292	295,019	(283,562)	341	**261,090**
Total	254,723	348,799	(342,432)	-	**261,090**

13. Analysis of net assets between funds

2023/24	Un-restricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Fixed assets	**1,998**	**-**	**1,998**
Debtors	**9,001**	**-**	**9,001**
Cash at bank and in hand	**266,186**	**-**	**266,186**
Creditors	**(25,989)**	**-**	**(25,989)**
Funds	**251,196**	**-**	**251,196**

2022/23	Un-restricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Fixed assets	3,860	-	3,860
Debtors	27,084	-	27,084
Cash at bank and in hand	254,023	-	254,023
Creditors	(23,877)	-	(23,877)
Funds	261,090	-	261,090

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

14. Related party transactions

Fees & expenses were paid to three Trustees for services provided to train writers to work with children and to lead creative writing workshops and short courses, as follows:

L Blower	£nil	(2023: £250)
T Glave	£nil	(2023: £200)
G Leadbetter	£nil	(2023:£285.18)

Midland Creative Projects Limited, a Company owned and controlled by the Chief Executive, received total expenses of £1,289.69 (2023: £147.62) relating to expenditure incurred on behalf of Writing West Midlands.

The Articles of Association allow payments to Trustees for the supply of services in connection with the charitable company's charitable activities.

15. Operating lease commitments

The total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows	**2024**	2023
Expiring:	**£**	£
- Within one year	**-**	-
- Between two and five years	**-**	-

16. Controlling Interests

The charity is controlled by the Trustees.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

17. Prior year comparative Statement of Financial Activities

	Un-restricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023
Income from:	**£**	**£**	**£**
Donations and legacies	**193,596**	**3,775**	**197,371**
Charitable Activities	**97,406**	**50,005**	**147,411**
Trading Activities	**3,500**	**-**	**3,500**
Investments – bank interest	**517**	**-**	**517**
Total income	**295,019**	**53,780**	**348,799**
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	**20,171**	**-**	**20,171**
Charitable activities	**263,391**	**58,870**	**322,261**
Total Expenditure	**283,562**	**58,870**	**342,432**
Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds for year	**11,457**	**(5,090)**	**6,367**
Reconciliation of funds			
Total funds brought forward	249,292	5,431	254,723
Transfer of funds	341	(341)	-
Total funds carried forward	**261,090**	**-**	**261,090**

WRITING WEST MIDLANDS LTD

England & Wales - Charity number 1147710

Accounts

Writing West Midlands Ltd

(a Company Limited by Guarantee)

Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

Registered Company number 06264124

Registered Charity number 1147710

Index

	Page
Report of the Trustees	3-11
Statement of Trustees responsibilities	12
Report of the independent examiner	13
Statement of financial activities (incorporating an Income & Expenditure Account)	14
Balance sheet	15
Principal Accounting Policies	16-18
Notes to the financial statements	19-28

Report of the Trustees

The directors of Writing West Midlands Ltd ("the charitable company") are its Trustees for the purpose of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as its Trustees. The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, 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 (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019).

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting the charitable company's report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The objects of the Charity, as set out in its Memorandum and Articles of Association, are to advance education in the arts for the public benefit by promotion of creative writing, in particular but not exclusively in the UK's West Midlands region.

To achieve these objects Writing West Midlands has a series of **Objectives**, as follows:

Workforce/Talent Development - Workforce/Talent Development activities develop the skills and talents of creative writers in all genres and forms.

Artform/Sector Development - Artform/Sector Development activities challenge and support the literature sector to develop the highest quality of creative writing.

Participation/Market Development - Participation/Market Development activities encourage emerging and established writers to participate in opportunities created or signposted.

Audience/Readership Development - Audience/Readership Development activities develop audiences/readers for new writers and their work.

Young People Engagement - Young People Engagement activities offer children and young people the opportunity to develop as creative writers.

Regional Development - Regional Development activities promote writing in the West Midlands in partnership with national and international organisations.

National/International Development - National and International Development activities develop the national offer for literature development and create opportunities for our writers to work beyond the UK.

Organisational Development - Organisational Development activities improve the way we run our organisation, including developing staff, volunteers and our Board of Trustees.

Our pursuit of these **Objectives** is informed by our commitment to Arts Council England's Let's Create Strategy and its Investment Principles. **Objectives** are delivered through activities across four main areas of work, along with work to support our Governance, Management and Organisational Development. These four areas of work and their activities are as follows:

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Writer Development

We support emerging and established writers with a programme of events and activities. This includes our annual writer networking conference (The National Writers' Conference), our Room 204 Writer Development Scheme and regular one-to-one advice and guidance sessions. We offer universities bespoke Creative Writing Career Seminars for their students.

We run a year-round programme of writing workshops and short-courses and other creative writing activities. We work with other organisations, for instance The Commonwealth Games, to create creative opportunities for writers. We make links with writing communities outside the UK to develop opportunities for writers in our region. We also run regional networks of university creative writing courses, literary translators and independent literary publishers.

Young Writers

We work with children and young people to develop their interest in creative writing, largely through out of school activities but also with schools. This includes running our network of Spark Young Writers' Groups, publishing an online creative writing magazine for young writers and running our Young Writers Toolkit (offering advice for young people about the writing industry).

Festival & Events

We develop audiences/readers for emerging and established writers and their work. This focuses on our Birmingham Literature Festival. We run a regional network of literature festival producers and provide on-going advice and guidance to other event organisers.

Reader Development

We manage the West Midlands Readers' Network, an Arts Council England funded project that works with readers groups, public libraries and independent bookshops to provide support for 'creative reading'. This includes an annual online conference for public library and independent bookshop staff, a short story commissioning programme and an events programme for readers groups.

Governance, Management & Organisational Development

We work constantly to improve the ways in which our organisation is governed, managed and organised. This includes offering training for staff, for volunteers and for our Board of Trustees, regular updating of our policies and financial management and IT management systems. Much governance is managed through our Finance & Resources, Personnel, Diversity, Contributed Income, Communications, Artistic Policy and Young Writers Sub-Committees.

When reviewing and planning activities over the year, Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'. To broaden access and achieve our stated aims, we set costs of attendance and participation at the lowest possible level and offer many events, activities and services at no cost. We offer Bursary places across all our events and activities for those who are economically marginalised. We adopted the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and will use these to guide our work.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Writer Development

Our Writer Development work continued to focus on emerging writers requiring a range of support to develop and sustain their creative careers. This work included on-going sign-posting through social media, public events, training and one to one mentoring for those on our Room 204 Writer Development Scheme and others.

Room 204 Writer Development Programme & One to One Mentoring

Much of our Room 204 Writer Development Programme activity remained online, allowing us to efficiently engage with writers across our region, although in-person Room 204 Meet-Ups were run at our Birmingham office. A further 15 emerging writers joined our Room 204 Writer Development Programme, selected from 130 applications, bringing the membership up to 172, including people from all 14 West Midlands local authority areas in the region. The Programme offered workshops, one to one career mentoring and free entrance to our 2023 National Writers' Conference (for those newly joined). Room 204 Exchanges were introduced, being a monthly one hour sharing online of skills knowledge and by a Room 204 writer for other Room 204 writers.

Existing participants in the Programme continued to receive one to one mentoring. Our Chief Executive continued to contact Room 204 writers from early cohorts, offering additional one to one time. The Room 204 Programme is unique in offering permanent and ongoing support to those who are selected to join. 100% of those on the Programme indicated a satisfaction level of good or excellent. One to one mentoring on all aspects of the writing industry was also offered to other writers and literature professionals and, including one to ones with Room 204 writers, a total of 137 sessions were delivered during the year.

We continued to run a paid for mentoring programme for the regional publisher Nine Arches Press and had a smaller scale and un-costed relationship with The Emma Press, Verve Press and a new fiction publisher, Floodgate Press.

National Writers' Conference, Short Courses & Workshops

Our annual National Writers' Conference was hosted by University of Birmingham, with a podcast being produced after the Conference. Our programme of short courses and workshops continued, largely online. A total of 911 people attended 78 training sessions and 2051 hours of training was provided. The satisfaction level for our short courses, workshops and the National Writers' Conference was 100% good or excellent.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Other Writer Development Initiatives

We continued to provide mentoring for the Birmingham Poet Laureate 2020 – 22 (Casey Bailey) and managed the process to recruit a Birmingham Poet Laureate and Birmingham Young Poet Laureate for 2022 – 24. We continued to support the Coventry Poet Laureate 2021 – 2023 (Emilie Lauren Jones). We managed regional recruitment for writers from disadvantaged backgrounds to receive critical readings ('free reads') of creative writing through The Literacy Consultancy. We supported a Translator in Residence project, working with Aston University and two leading translators, working with the Shropshire-based translator Sarah Letza. We managed two online creative writing groups as part of Writing East Midlands *Beyond the Spectrum* project. We ran six Regional Writer Meet-Ups to introduce our work to emerging writers across the region. We managed regional Universities Creative Writing, Literary Translators and Independent Publishers Networks.

We continued to run online networks for university creative writing courses, literary translators and independent literary publishers. We continued to support our Keele University and Birmingham City University Collaborative Doctoral Research Students as they worked on their PhDs. We completed our work with the animated comic book project, *Winds of Change,* working with KayMedia in Zimbabwe and the Room 204 writer Anabel Brightling, with funding from the British Council. We successfully drafted and applied for funding from Arts Council England for a programme of work with The Poetry Pharmacy in Bishop's Castle, Shropshire.

Young Writers

Activities with Young Writers reverted to largely being delivered in person. Our work with young writers from age 8 upwards continued to be central to a significant element of our programme of activities. Most of this work was delivered through our Spark Young Writers Programme.

Spark Young Writers Groups

The number of Spark Young Writers Groups increased to 17, with two of these being online and the rest being in various locations across the region. Satisfaction rates for these groups (good or excellent) reached 91%.

Publications & Other Activities

We published two online editions of our Spark Young Writers Magazine, professionally edited and with contributions from young writers across the region. We delivered a programme of creative work with young people funded by the Birmingham Commonwealth 2022. This allowed us to work with young people in three schools to make poetry videos.

We were successful in bidding for a tender to run *Careers with Words,* a programme to promote careers in creative writing, publishing, bookselling and public libraries funded by Arts Connect and the Association of Senior Children's and Education Librarians. This delivered a programme of work in four locations in the West Midlands region.

Summary of Young Writers Provision

In total, we offered 161 training sessions and 2906 hours of engagement. Attenders at our activities for young writers numbered 1283 and came from 23 local authority areas, including all West Midlands areas and some other local authority areas. We offered 5 other Spark Young Writers activities (for instance Instagram writing prompts).

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Festivals & Events

Poets for Ukraine Events x 2 / Birmingham (UK) International Literary Salons

Our Festival & Events programme began to reverted to mostly in-person, with a four-day Birmingham Literature Festival and a two day Skylines Poetry Festival amongst other activities.

Birmingham Literature Festival & Year-Round Events

The Birmingham Literature Festival was presented as a four day in-person event in October, based at the Birmingham Rep. Although issues were experienced with industrial action on the railways, the Festival was well received with good audiences. Satisfaction rates for the Birmingham Literature Festival (good or excellent) reached 92%.

A single day focussing on Black Writing, *Africa Writes Days,* was presented later in October, using the Legacy Centre in Aston, Birmingham, as a venue. A Readers Day was presented with the West Midlands Readers' Network in late October, using The Priory Rooms in Birmingham as a venue.

Along with publishers Nine Arches Press, a weekend poetry Festival, *Skylines*, was presented in Coventry in July, using the Belgrade Theatre as a venue. This used funds unspent from our Contains Strong Language Festival in Coventry the previous year. With local writer David Calcutt, we supported two poetry events concerned with the plight of the people of the Ukraine.

Our Birmingham International Literary Salon continued to present a monthly online discussion event with writers from beyond the Anglosphere, attracting between 15 and 20 participants upon each occasion.

Our Festivals and Events totalled 49 events, with 2757 attendances and 112 writers being involved.

Reader Development

Our Reader Development work focussed on our management of the West Midlands Readers' Network, using National Lottery Project Grant funding from Arts Council England to run a programme of work from April 2022 until December 2023.

The programme of work included a short story commissioning scheme with readers groups, an online day conference for public library staff on reader development (the *Librarians' Virtual Toolkit*), two Reading Spas, two readers in residence and a Readers Day. We also facilitated nine events for readers groups.

The Librarians' Virtual Toolkit was attended by 120 people with an additional 357 watching the YouTube recording of the event. Satisfaction rate (good or excellent) for the Readers Day was 93%.

Writing West Midlands invited a group of new independent bookshops to join our Independent Publishers Network.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

FUTURE PLANS

From 2023/24 we will begin a new three-year National Portfolio Organisation funded programme with Arts Council England. The work funded will be a development of previous work, across four main areas of work – Festival & Events, Writer Development, Young Writers and Reader Development. With Arts Council England funding being given at standstill, some small reductions in work will be required although it is anticipated that additional funding may be forthcoming from other sources to support our core work and new projects.

The Birmingham Literature Festival will remain a flag-ship project. Our Birmingham International Literary Salon will continue as a monthly online event. We will continue to support the four regional networks (literary translators, university creative writing, literature festivals and independent publishers) and will look to develop our international work, for instance by inviting writers from mainland Europe to attend our Festival.

Our work to support individual writers will continue, with our National Writers' Conference, our Room 204 Writer Development Scheme and our one-to-one mentoring. Our Short Course and Workshop programme will continue, and we will look to refresh the range presented. We will support other on-going writer development initiatives, including The Literacy Agency's free-read scheme. All this activity will be presented as a combination of online and in-person.

Work with children and young people will remain an important and long-term focus. We will bring our programme of Spark Young Writers Groups back up to 21 groups, with three remaining permanently online. We will present a day event, *Careers in Words,* for young people aged 14 to 22, to encourage them to enter the writing industry. We will continue to publish our on-line creative writing magazine for young writers. We will apply to the Paul Hamlyn Foundation for funding to run creative writing work in schools.

Organisationally, we will continue to sustain our core offer across our region, while developing new initiatives where funding allows. We will develop sponsorship relationships, particularly those linked to the Birmingham Literature Festival.

Our various systems, including personnel and financial management and marketing, will be subject to continual development. We will continue to develop appropriate Customer Relationship Management systems for the organisation, which will help streamline how we communicate with many individuals and organisations. We will continue to recruit and train volunteers, particularly for our work with our Spark Young Writers' Groups and our festivals and events.

We will begin planning for work to take place from 2026 to 2029, potentially using Arts Council England funding alongside contributed income and earned income. This work will particularly focus on developing the Birmingham Literature Festival and our Spark Young Writers Groups programme. We will consider adopting the United Nationals Sustainable Development Goals as a means of ensuring our work contributes to progressive change.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

A surplus of £6,367 (2022: £10,532) was reported for the year. This increased total funds as at 31 March 2023, which now stand at £261,090 compared to £254,723 at the prior period end. A reduction in Charitable Income was matched by a reduction in expenditure, largely due to completion of the Contains Strong Language Programme in 2021/22.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Reserves policy and risks

The Charity is constantly reviewing its cost base and implementing efficiencies with a view to maintaining liquid reserves to the equivalent of the level of annual funding from Arts Council England, a figure of £184K. The free reserves as at 31 March 2023 were £261,090, and therefore higher than currently recommended by the reserves policy. The Finance & Resources Sub-Committee will propose a new Reserves Policy to include applying some unneeded reserves to core or new activity.

Going Concern

The Trustees have reviewed the long-term viability of the Charity on a regular basis, particularly in light of the increased cost of living. With confirmation of Arts Council England funding from 2023/24 to 2025/26 – albeit at standstill levels – and with the currently high level of reserves, the Trustees feel confident that the Charity is a Going Concern with very modest risks over the next three years.

Risk management statement

The Trustees have continued to work on the development of its risk management strategy which has included an annual review of the risks that the charity may face, including appointing new IT contractors. The Trustees have continued working on formalising the documentation of systems and procedures in place to mitigate those risks identified in the review and implementing any required further procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should the risks materialise.

The key risks and uncertainties that have been identified and are being managed are:

- Personnel – loss of key staff, poor management of staff
- Governance – lack of appropriate trustee-level skills, poor reporting to Trustees
- Artistic Programme & Policy – low artistic quality, poor diversity levels
- Delivery – inappropriate venues, poor marketing
- Financial – key funding not forthcoming, low contributed income, increased costs across all areas
- Systems – poor IT management, failure of systems
- Child Protection – poor child-safeguarding policy implementation

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

Writing West Midlands Limited is a company limited by guarantee and was registered as a charity on 15 June 2012. The Charitable Company is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association which were adopted by the Board of Trustees on 13 March 2012.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Appointment of Trustees, induction & training

New Trustees are appointed by invitation to join the Board given that they have the necessary skills and experience to contribute to the Trust's activities and to be able to discharge their obligations as Trustees. Prospective new Trustees meet initially with the Chair and Chief Executive and are then invited to observe a meeting of the Board of Trustees, at which they are given all relevant papers, including financial reports. A document produced by the Charity Commission on the responsibilities of Trustees is also provided. Subject to the prospective Trustee and the Board of Trustees being in favour of membership a Resolution is issued and voted on at a Board Meeting. The two longest serving Trustees are required to submit themselves for re-election annually.

Trustees are encouraged to attend a range of our activities, including the Birmingham Literature Festival and our work with young writers. In addition to attending quarterly Board Meetings and an AGM, Trustees are required to join at least one of our sub-committees (Finance, Personnel, Artistic, Marketing, Contributed Income, Diversity and Young Writers). Trustees are asked to complete a Conflict of Interest Declaration.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees:
Ms Nikki Bi (Chair)
Professor Gregory Leadbetter
Ms Olwen Brown
Ms Maeve Clarke
Mr John Roberts
Mr George D Bastow
Dr Lisa Blower
Mr Robert Elkington
Ms Laura A Willis
Mr Thomas E Glave
Ms Sandra van Lente (appointed 1 December 2022)

Company Secretary:
vacant

Charity Number: 1147710

Company number: 06264124

Registered Office:
Studio 130, Zellig,
Gibb Street
Birmingham
B9 4AT

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Independent Examiner:
Karen Hanlan, ACA
Karen Hanlan Independent Examiner Ltd
1 Saracen Close
Ettington
CV37 7SZ

Bankers:
The Co-operative Bank p.l.c.
PO Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester
M60 4EP

Approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by:

Nikki Bi
Trustee

Date: 8th November 2023

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charitable company and of the surplus or deficit incurred by the charitable company for that year. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue to exist.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the charitable company has an appropriate system of controls, financial and otherwise.

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

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for

the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and to provide reasonable assurance that:

- the charitable company is operating efficiently and effectively;
- its assets are safeguarded against un-authorised use or disposition;
- proper records are maintained, and financial information used within the charity or for publication is reliable;
- the charitable company complies with relevant laws and regulations.

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Writing West Midlands Ltd ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2023 which are set out on pages 14 to 28.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3) the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4) the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

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



Date: 8 November 2023

Karen Hanlan,
Member of Institute of Chartered Accountants England & Wales
Karen Hanlan Independent Examiner Ltd
1 Saracen Close
Ettington
Warwickshire
CV37 7SZ

Statement of Financial Activities (including an Income & Expenditure Account)

	Note	Un-restricted funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023	Total 2022
Income from:		£	£	£	£
Donations and legacies	1	**193,596**	**3,775**	**197,371**	190,865
Charitable Activities	2	**97,406**	**50,005**	**147,411**	276,483
Trading Activities	3	**3,500**	**-**	**3,500**	-
Investments – bank interest		**517**	**-**	**517**	933
Total income		**295,019**	**53,780**	**348,799**	468,281
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	4	**20,171**	**-**	**20,171**	18,504
Charitable activities	5	**263,391**	**58,870**	**322,261**	439,245
Total Expenditure		**283,562**	**58,870**	**342,432**	457,749
Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds for year		**11,457**	**(5,090)**	**6,367**	10,532
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		249,292	5,431	254,723	244,191
Transfer of funds		341	(341)	-	-
Total funds carried forward		**261,090**	**-**	**261,090**	254,723

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

Balance sheet

Company registered number 06264124

	Notes	2023	2022
		£	£
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	9	**3,860**	2,457
Current Assets			
Debtors	10	**27,084**	51,316
Cash at bank and in hand		**254,023**	237,313
		281,107	288,629
Current Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	**(23,877)**	(36,363)
Net current assets		**257,230**	252,266
Net assets		**261,090**	254,723
The funds of the Charity:			
Restricted Funds	12	**-**	5,431
Unrestricted Funds	12	**261,090**	249,292
Total charity funds		**261,090**	254,723

The accompanying accounting policies and notes form part of these financial statements.

For the year ended 31 March 2023 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Responsibilities of directors/Trustees:

(a) The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006 - however, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 the financial statements have been examined by an independent examiner whose report appears on page 13.

(b) The directors/Trustees acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

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

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:
Nikki Bi, Trustee

Date: 8th November 2023

Principal accounting policies

Status of the company
The charitable company is limited by guarantee and does not have share capital. The liability of members is limited to £1 per member.

Basis of preparation
The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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 (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Writing West Midlands meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

Going concern statement
The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis which assumes that the Charitable Company will continue to operate. The validity of this assumption is dependent upon the continuance of support from the Charitable Company's key grant funder (Arts Council England), which was confirmed on 4th November 2022 with an announcement that regular funding would continue at the agreed level until March 2026, and in response to the progress made by the Charitable Company in pursuing a viable budget including the obtaining of further grants and other funds. The Charitable Company's current business plan shows that the Charitable Company will be able to operate in the foreseeable future. Based on this understanding, the directors believe that it remains appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. The financial statements do not include any adjustments, which would result from the basis of preparation being inappropriate.

Funds
Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations and grants subject to conditions imposed by the provider or by specific terms of the appeal under which the funds were raised. The restrictive conditions are binding upon the Charitable Company.

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

Income relating to future periods, as a result of donor-imposed conditions specifying the time period, has been treated as deferred income.

Income dependent on certain conditions, amounting to more than mere administrative requirements, is recognised when the conditions have been fulfilled.

Principal accounting policies (continued)

Donated services and facilities
Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charitable company of the item is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP FRS102, general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charitable company which is the amount the charitable company would have been willing to pay to obtain the services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Interest receivable
Bank interest is shown on the basis of amounts receivable in the year.

Expenditure
Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charitable company to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds comprises the costs of staff time, publicity and other costs associated with raising income and includes an allocation of associated support & governance costs.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of festivals and events, Writer Development and Young Writers programmes undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support & governance costs.

Allocation of support costs
Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charitable company but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charities activities. These costs have been allocated between costs of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities and have been allocated based on the amount of time spent by staff on each area of activity.

Tangible fixed assets
Depreciation is provided at a rate calculated to write off the cost on a straight line basis over a period of less than the estimated useful life of the assets as follows:

Computer equipment, Office equipment & furniture	33% per annum

Fixed asset purchases above £500 are capitalised.

Cash and cash equivalents
Cash and cash equivalents include cash at bank and in hand and short term deposits repayable on within a three month notice period.

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

Principal accounting policies (continued)

Creditors
Creditors are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

Taxation
As a registered charity no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

Pension costs
The charity contributes into a Group Personal Pension Plan for employees. This pension plan is defined contribution in nature and as required under FRS102 the annual cost is recognised as incurred and included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Notes to the financial statements

1. Income from donations and legacies

	2023	2022
	£	£
Un-restricted:		
Arts Council England – National Portfolio Funding	**184,375**	184,375
Donations (Including Friends)	**496**	970
Gifts in kind	**8,725**	3,120
Total un-restricted grants & donations	**193,596**	188,465
Restricted grants:		
Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society	**3,775**	2,400
Total restricted grants	**3,775**	2,400
Total income from donations and legacies	**197,371**	190,865

Gifts in kind relate to donated facilities and services provided by other organisations to enable Writing West Midlands to carry out its activities. They comprise venue costs in relation to events and workshops.

2. Income from charitable activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Restricted grants:		
EU- Creative Europe Project	**-**	41,308
Coventry City of Culture	**38,535**	200,089
Birmingham City Council – Commonwealth Games Project	**11,470**	-
Total restricted grants	**50,005**	241,397
Un-restricted income:		
Festivals & events	**20,197**	5,127
Writer development	**13,342**	16,870
Work with Young Writers & schools	**44,136**	9,988
Other earned income	**19,731**	3,101
Total un-restricted income	**97,406**	35,086
Total income from Charitable Activities	**147,411**	276,483

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

3. Income from trading activities

Income from trading activities relates to sponsorship from organisations supporting the Birmingham Literature Festival and other events and workshops.

4. Analysis of expenditure on raising funds

	2023	2022
	£	£
Staff costs	**12,059**	11,019
Printing, publicity & marketing costs	**1,111**	537
Allocation of support costs	**5,739**	5,836
Allocation of governance costs	**1,262**	1,112
Total cost of raising funds	**20,171**	18,504

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

5. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	Festivals & Events	Writer development	Young Writers	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£
Direct operating and programming costs	37,888	20,958	46,694	**105,540**
Coventry City of Culture Contains Strong Language Festival	34,024	-	-	**34,024**
Bursaries	-	2,034	1,477	**3,511**
Marketing, printing & publicity	15,548	2,221	3,333	**21,102**
Staff costs	41,774	19,803	38,437	**100,014**
Support costs	19,883	9,426	18,295	**47,604**
Governance costs	4,372	2,072	4,022	**10,466**
Total 2022/23	**153,489**	**56,514**	**112,258**	**322,261**

Expenditure on charitable activities includes £263,391(2022: £193,845) relating to un-restricted funds and £58,870(2022: £242,045) relating to restricted funds. Direct operating and programming costs includes gifts in kind of £8,725 (2022 £3,120) in relation to venues provided for Young Writers Groups, the conference and summer schools free of charge.
Support & governance costs have been allocated across activity categories in accordance with time spent by staff in those areas.

	Festivals & Events	Writer development	Young Writers	2022 Total
	£	£	£	£
Direct operating and programming costs	18,773	14,560	20,640	**53,973**
Direct production costs of READ ON project	-	-	29,171	**29,171**
Coventry City of Culture Contains Strong Language Festival	193,398	-	-	**193,398**
Bursaries	-	1,290	-	**1,290**
Marketing, printing & publicity	7,520	1,074	1,612	**10,206**
Staff costs	40,924	19,190	32,620	**92,734**
Support costs	21,676	10,164	17,278	**49,118**
Governance costs	4,128	1,936	3,291	**9,355**
Total 2021/22	**286,419**	**48,214**	**104,612**	**439,245**

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

6. Analysis of support and governance costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2023 Total
	£	£	£
Staff costs	18,050	9,215	27,265
Staff training, travel & subsistence	2,534	-	2,534
Office costs	31,536	-	31,536
Depreciation	1,223	-	1,223
Legal & professional fees	-	13	13
Independent Examiners fees (including accountancy)	-	2,500	2,500
Total 2022/23	53,343	11,728	65,071

	Support costs	Governance costs	2022 Total
	£	£	£
Staff costs	17,689	8,622	26,311
Staff training, travel & subsistence	1,460	-	1,460
Office costs	34,531	-	34,531
Depreciation	1,274	-	1,274
Legal & professional fees	-	48	48
Independent Examiners fees	-	1,650	1,650
Trustee meeting costs	-	147	147
Total 2021/22	54,954	10,467	65,421

7. Net income for the year

	2023	2022
Net income for the year is stated after charging:	£	£
Depreciation	1,223	1,274
Independent examiners fees -		
Independent examination	1,350	1,250
Accountancy services	1,150	400

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

8. Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses

	2023	2022
	£	£
Salaries	130,472	120,561
National Insurance	5,852	5,159
Pension	3,014	4,344
Total	139,338	130,064

Staff Numbers

	Number	Number
Average number of full-time equivalent excluding Trustees	3.7	3.7

No employees had employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2022: nil).

The charitable company's trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year, other than that noted in note 14 on page 27. No Trustee expenses were reimbursed during the year (2022: £nil).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive. Trustees receive no remuneration or other benefits from the charity. The remuneration of key management personnel (excluding pension contributions) for the year was £39,193 (2022: £39,013).

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

9. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer Equipment £	Furniture, Fixture, & Fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At beginning of year	15,907	1,615	17,522
Additions	2,626	-	2,626
At end of year	18,533	1,615	20,148
Depreciation			
At beginning of year	13,450	1,615	15,065
Charge for the year	1,223	-	1,223
At end of year	14,673	1,615	16,288
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2023	**3,860**	**-**	**3,860**
At 31 March 2022	2,457	-	2,457

10. Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade debtors	**3,576**	5,763
Other debtors	**2,880**	2,880
Prepayments	**2,558**	5,323
Accrued income	**18,070**	37,350
	27,084	51,316

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade creditors	3,453	2,666
Taxation and social security	8,615	1,703
Deferred income	3,269	27,698
Accruals	8,540	4,296
	23,877	36,363

Deferred income:	2023	2022
	£	£
Balance brought forward	27,698	110,095
Transferred to statement of financial activities	(27,698)	(89,514)
Deferred in year	3,269	7,118
Balance at end of year	3,269	27,698

Deferred income relates to grants and fees received in advance of the period to which they relate.

12. Funds

2022/23	Balance at beginning of year £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at end of year £
Restricted funds					
Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society	-	3,775	(3,775)	-	-
Contains Strong Language Festival	5,431	38,535	(43,966)	-	-
Commonwealth Game Project	-	11,470	(11,129)	(341)	-
	5,431	53,780	(58,870)	(341)	-
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	249,292	295,019	(283,562)	341	261,090
Total	254,723	348,799	(342,432)	-	261,090

Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society – Funding received to support attendance at the National Writers' Conference for Room 204 participants.

Contains Strong Language Festival – Funded by the Arts Council England, Coventry City of Culture Trust and the British Council for events in 2021 as part of Coventry's City of Culture. Arts Council England then agreed for unspent funds to be applied to activities in Coventry in July 2022.

Commonwealth Games Project – Funded by Birmingham City Council towards a programme of poetry work with young people.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

2021/22	Balance at beginning of year £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at end of year £
Restricted funds					
Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society	2,250	2,400	(4,650)	-	-
Contains Strong Language Festival	(1,190)	200,089	(193,468)	-	**5,431**
EU- Creative Europe Project	-	41,308	(43,927)	**2,619**	-
	1,060	243,797	(242,045)	**2,619**	**5,431**
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	243,131	224,484	(215,704)	**(2,619)**	**249,292**
Total	244,191	468,281	(457,749)	-	**254,723**

13. Analysis of net assets between funds

2022/23	Un-restricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Fixed assets	**3,860**	-	**3,860**
Debtors	**27,084**	-	**27,084**
Cash at bank and in hand	**254,023**	-	**254,023**
Creditors	**(23,877)**	-	**(23,877)**
Funds	**261,090**	-	**261,090**

2021/22	Un-restricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Fixed assets	2,457	-	2,457
Debtors	51,316	-	51,316
Cash at bank and in hand	211,301	26,012	237,313
Creditors	(15,782)	(20,581)	(36,363)
Funds	249,292	5,431	254,723

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

14. Related party transactions

Fees & expenses were paid to three Trustees for services provided to train writers to work with children and to lead creative writing workshops and short courses, as follows:

G Bastow	£nil	(2022: £450)
L Blower	£250	(2022: £175)
T Glave	£200	(2022: £1,025)
G Leadbetter	£285.18	(2022:£nil)

Midland Creative Projects Limited, a Company owned and controlled by the Chief Executive, paid Writing West Midlands £nil (2022: £1,612.50) for its involvement with the Read On Creative Europe Project. In addition, total expenses of £147.62(2022: £588.08) were reimbursed to Midland Creative Arts Projects relating to expenditure incurred on behalf of Writing West Midlands.

The Articles of Association allow payments to Trustees for the supply of services in connection with the charitable company's charitable activities.

15. Operating lease commitments

The total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows	**2023**	2022
Expiring:	**£**	£
- Within one year	**-**	-
- Between two and five years	**-**	-

16. Controlling Interests

The charity is controlled by the Trustees.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

17. Prior year comparative Statement of Financial Activities

	Un-restricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022
Income from:	£	£	£
Donations and legacies	**188,465**	**2,400**	**190,865**
Charitable Activities	**35,086**	**241,397**	**276,483**
Trading Activities	**-**	**-**	**-**
Investments – bank interest	**933**	**-**	**933**
Total income	**224,484**	**243,797**	**468,281**
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	**18,504**	**-**	**18,504**
Charitable activities	**197,200**	**242,045**	**439,245**
Total Expenditure	**215,704**	**242,045**	**457,749**
Net income and net movement in funds for year	**8,780**	**1,752**	**10,532**
Reconciliation of funds			
Total funds brought forward	243,131	1,060	244,191
Transfer of funds	(2,619)	2,619	-
Total funds carried forward	**249,292**	**5,431**	**254,723**

WRITING WEST MIDLANDS LTD

England & Wales - Charity number 1147710

Accounts

Writing West Midlands Ltd

(a Company Limited by Guarantee)

Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

Registered Company number 06264124

Registered Charity number 1147710

Writing West Midlands Ltd
Financial Statements
for the year ended 31 March 2022

Index

	Page
Report of the Trustees	3-11
Statement of Trustees responsibilities	12
Report of the independent examiner	13
Statement of financial activities (incorporating an Income & Expenditure Account)	14
Balance sheet	15
Principal Accounting Policies	16-18
Notes to the financial statements	19-28

Report of the Trustees

The directors of Writing West Midlands Ltd ("the charitable company") are its Trustees for the purpose of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as its Trustees. The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, 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 (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019).

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting the charitable company's report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The objects of the Charity, as set out in its Memorandum and Articles of Association, are to advance education in the arts for the public benefit by promotion of creative writing, in particular but not exclusively in the UK's West Midlands region.

To achieve these objects Writing West Midlands has a series of **Objectives**, as follows:

Workforce/Talent Development - Workforce/Talent Development activities develop the skills and talents of creative writers in all genres and forms.

Artform/Sector Development - Artform/Sector Development activities challenge and support the literature sector to develop the highest quality of creative writing.

Participation/Market Development - Participation/Market Development activities encourage emerging and established writers to participate in opportunities created or signposted.

Audience/Readership Development - Audience/Readership Development activities develop audiences/readers for new writers and their work.

Young People Engagement - Young People Engagement activities offer children and young people the opportunity to develop as creative writers.

Regional Development - Regional Development activities promote writing in the West Midlands in partnership with national and international organisations.

National/International Development - National and International Development activities develop the national offer for literature development and create opportunities for our writers to work beyond the UK.

Organisational Development - Organisational Development activities improve the way we run our organisation, including developing staff, volunteers and our Board of Trustees.

Our pursuit of these **Objectives** is informed by our commitment to Arts Council England's Let's Create Strategy and its Investment Principles. **Objectives** are delivered through activities across four main areas of work, along with work to support our Governance, Management and Organisational Development. These four areas of work and their activities are as follows:

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Writer Development

We support emerging and established writers with a programme of events and activities. This includes our annual writer networking conference (The National Writers' Conference), our Room 204 Writer Development Scheme and regular one-to-one advice and guidance sessions. We offer universities bespoke Creative Writing Career Seminars for their students.

We run a year-round programme of writing workshops and short-courses and other creative writing activities, including commissions. We work with other organisations, for instance the British Council, to create commissioning opportunities for writers. We make links with writing communities outside the UK to develop opportunities for writers in our region. We also run regional networks of university creative writing courses, literary translators and independent literary publishers.

Young Writers

We work with children and young people to develop their interest in creative writing, largely through out of school activities but also in partnership with schools. This includes running our network of Spark Young Writers' Groups, arranging creative writing workshops in schools, publishing an online creative writing magazine for young writers and running our Spark Young Writers' Summer Writing Challenge. We were, until its completion in February 2022, a partner in the EU Creative Europe funded project, Read On.

Festival & Events

We develop audiences/readers for emerging and established writers and their work. This includes a literature festival – the Birmingham Literature Festival - and year-round events, in Birmingham and across the region. We work with partners to support other festivals, for instance the Contains Strong Language Coventry 2021 Festival. We also run a regional network of literature festival producers and provide on-going advice and guidance to other event organisers.

Reader Development

We manage the West Midlands Readers' Network, an Arts Council England funded project that works with readers groups, public libraries and independent bookshops to provide support for 'creative reading'. This includes an annual online conference for public library and independent bookshop staff, a short story commissioning programme and an events programme for readers groups.

Governance, Management & Organisational Development

We work constantly to improve the ways in which our organisation is governed, managed and organised. This includes offering training for staff, for volunteers and for our Board of Trustees, regular updating of our policies and systems, including our financial management and IT management.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

When reviewing and planning activities over the year, Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'. In order to broaden access and achieve our stated aims we set costs of attendance and participation at the lowest possible level and offer many events, activities and services at no cost.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The period of this Report was within the final period of the Covid-19 pandemic, which had some impact on our work.

Writer Development

Our Writer Development work continued to focus on emerging writers requiring a range of support to develop and sustain their creative careers. This work included on-going sign-posting through social media, public events, training and one to one mentoring for those on our Room 204 Writer Development Scheme and others.

Room 204 Writer Development Programme & One to One Mentoring

Our Room 204 Writer Development Programme activity largely remained online, allowing us to efficiently engage with writers across our region. A further 15 emerging writers joined our Room 204 Writer Development Programme, selected from 133 applications, bringing the membership up to 158, including people from all 14 West Midlands local authority areas in the region. The Programme offered workshops, a creative writing critiquing scheme, one to one career mentoring and free entrance to our 2022 National Writers' Conference (for those newly joined).

Existing participants in the Programme continued to receive one to one mentoring. Our Chief Executive continued to contact Room 204 writers from early cohorts, offering additional one to one time. The Room 204 Programme is unique in offering permanent and ongoing support to those who are selected to join. 100% of those on the Programme indicated a satisfaction level of good or excellent. One to one mentoring on all aspects of the writing industry was also offered to other writers and literature professionals and, including one to ones with Room 204 writers, a total of 122 sessions were delivered during the year.

We continued to run a paid for mentoring programme for the regional publisher Nine Arches Press and had a smaller scale and un-costed relationship with The Emma Press and Verve Press. Our work with the Contains Strong Language Coventry 2021 Festival, which began in January 2021 and extended across 2021/22, included a programme of writer development activities. It has been agreed with Arts Council England that unspent funds may be applied to some additional work to take place in July 2022 in Coventry.

National Writers' Conference, Short Courses & Workshops

Our annual National Writers' Conference returned to an in-person event, hosted by University of Birmingham. Our programme of short courses and workshops continued, largely online. A total of 735 people attended 76 training sessions and 1187 hours of training was provided. The satisfaction level for our short courses and workshops was 100% good or excellent.

We continued to provide mentoring for the Birmingham Poet Laureate 2020 – 22 (Casey Bailey) and as part of our work with BBC Contains Strong Language we set up and managed recruitment of a Coventry Poet Laureate 2021 – 2023

Report of the Trustees (continued)

(Emilie Lauren Jones) and a Coventry Young Poet Laureate 2021 – 2023 (Hawwa Hussain). We managed regional recruitment for writers from disadvantaged backgrounds to receive critical readings ('free reads') of creative writing through The Literacy Consultancy.

Other Writer Development Initiatives

We ran three online sub-regional Writer Meet-Ups to introduce our work to emerging writers across the region. We collaborated with the Ukrainian writer Lybko Deresh and the British Council in Kyiv to run an online conference focusing on writing from the occupied region of the Donbas and the Black Country region of the UK and to produce two podcasts on a similar theme. These activities took place in December 2021, prior to the invasion of the Ukraine by Russia.

We continued to run online networks for university creative writing courses, literary translators and independent literary publishers. We continued to support our Keele University and Birmingham City University Collaborative Doctoral Research Students as they worked on their PhDs.

We assisted in the commissioning of a writer to script an animated comic book, *Winds of Change,* working with KayMedia in Zimbabwe with funding from the British Council.

Young Writers

All Young Writers work took place online, although preparations were made to re-introduce in-person activities. Our work with young writers from age 8 upwards continued to be central to a significant element of our programme of activities. Most of this work was delivered through our Spark Young Writers Programme. Our involvement in the READ ON! Creative Europe project was completed after five years.

Spark Young Writers Groups & Spark Young Writers Summer Writing Challenge

We ran a slightly reduced programme of Spark Young Writers Groups, as demand for online activities continued to decline. We moved our five-day Spark Young Writers Summer Writing Challenge online, which ran successfully and was fully subscribed. In total, we offered 111 training sessions and 1735 hours of engagement. Attenders at our activities for young writers came from 23 local authority areas, including all West Midlands areas and some other local authority areas. We offered 42 other Spark Young Writers activities (for instance Instagram writing prompts).

Publications & Other Activities

We published two online editions of our Spark Young Writers Magazine, professionally edited and with contributions from young writers across the region. We were successful in an application for funding for a project as part of Birmingham Commonwealth 2022 to allow us to work with children from three schools to make poetry videos. This activity came to fruition in 2022/23.

READ ON!, Creative Europe Project

Our participation in the Creative Europe funded READ ON! project to support young people's engagement with creative

Report of the Trustees (continued)

writing and reading came to an end in November 2021. During 2021/22 this allowed schools groups to commission short stories from children's writers and production of anthologies of this work, amongst other work described in previous Annual Reports.

Festivals & Events

Our Festival & Events programme began to revert to in-person, with a one-day Birmingham Literature Festival and a four-day Contains Strong Language Coventry 2021 Festival. Some online work continued.

Birmingham Literature Festival & Year-Round Events

The Birmingham Literature Festival continued to offer online podcasts and a monthly piece of commissioned writing, shared online. The Festival ran one online event jointly with Nine Arches. A one-day in-person Birmingham Literature Festival event was run in October 2021, with good attendances across four events. Including year-round work, a total of 42 events and activities were presented on all platforms, with audiences and participants in various forms totalling 1973. A total of 208 writers and other creatives were involved.

We delivered the Contains Strong Language Festival in Coventry during September 2021, supported by a six month community participation programme. This included 43 events and activities, with 60% being broadcast live on various BBC Radio Stations or recorded for future broadcast. A one-day conference on the contemporary poetry industry was staged as part of this Festival in November 2021. It was agreed with Arts Council England that funds remaining from this project could be used for a small poetry festival to take place in Coventry in July 2022.

Our Birmingham International Literary Salon continued to present a monthly online discussion event with writers from beyond the Anglosphere, attracting between 15 and 20 participants upon each occasion.

Towards the end of the financial year, much work was undertaken to plan our October 2022 Birmingham Literature Festival, including securing three Guest Curators (Casey Bailey, Otegha Uwagba and Paul McVeigh) and a venue-use agreement with the Birmingham Rep.

Reader Development

Our Reader Development work focussed on our management of the West Midlands Readers' Network. Our application to the Charity Commission for the Network to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation was successful. Our Lottery Project Grant Application to Arts Council England on behalf of the Network was also successful, funding a programme of work from April 2022 until December 2023.

During the year, we continued to manage the West Midlands Readers' Network's work funded with existing Arts Council England funding. This included a second The Librarians' Virtual Toolkit Conference in June 2021, attracting a total of 304 live and post-event views. We continued with a scheme to allow a readers group to commission emerging and established writers to write a short story for their group. Seven readers groups took up this opportunity, with a booklet of the short stories published in Autumn 2021.

Other online activity for readers groups was promoted, including an intensive one day 'reading salon' focussing on

Report of the Trustees (continued)

contemporary poetry, a number of online writer visits to readers groups (including a library tour by the poet Liz Berry) and a 'reader in residence' project with the writer Mike Gayle in the independent bookshop, Bookshop on the Green, in south Birmingham.

FUTURE PLANS

Our focus during 2022/23 and onwards will continue to be our four main areas of work – Festival & Events, Writer Development, Young Writers and Reader Development. We anticipate returning many activities to in-person, although also maintaining an online option for much of our work, through podcasts and Zoom-based activities. The Birmingham Literature Festival will remain a flag-ship project, although condensed into a more manageable four-day event. Our Birmingham International Literary Salon will continue as a monthly online event. We will present a small poetry festival in Coventry in July 2022. We will continue to support the four regional networks which we continue to be important as will sustaining and developing our international work. We will extend our interest in supporting literary translators through a Translator in Residence project.

Our work to support individual writers will continue, with our National Writers' Conference, our Room 204 Writer Development Scheme and our one-to-one mentoring. Our Short Course and Workshop programme will continue, and we will look to refresh the range presented. We will support other on-going writer development initiatives, including The Literacy Agency's free-read scheme. All this activity will be presented as a combination of online and in-person.

Work with children and young people will remain an important and long-term focus. We will bring our programme of Spark Young Writers Groups back up to 16 groups, with two remaining permanently online. We will present our Spark Young Writers' Summer Writing Challenge online, migrating to a hybrid model for 2023, and will develop a new one-day event for young people interested in knowing more about the broader writing industry. We will continue to publish our on-line creative writing magazine for young writers.

Organisationally, we will continue to sustain our core offer across our region, while developing new initiatives where funding allows (for instance, linked to the Birmingham Commonwealth Games). We will re-activate a number of sponsorship relationships, particularly those linked to the Birmingham Literature Festival.

Our various systems, including personnel and financial management and marketing, will be subject to continual development. We will continue to develop appropriate Customer Relationship Management systems for the organisation, which will help streamline how we communicate with many individuals and organisations. We will continue to recruit and train volunteers, particularly for our work with our Spark Young Writers' Groups and our festivals and events.

In response to the priorities of the Government and Arts Council England, we will migrate some of our work to some of the 13 Levelling Up for Culture Priority Places in the region. Following a recent successful application for funding from Arts Council England from 2023 to 2026, we will develop a plan for work across this period and beyond.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

A surplus of £10,532 (2021 £40,467) was reported for the year. This increased total funds as at 31 March 2022, which now stand at £254,723 compared to £244,191 at the prior period end. Income for Charitable Activities was significantly increased to fund the Contains Strong Language Festival, with a corresponding increase in cost of Charitable Activities.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

This project, and our final period of involvement in the *Read On! Project,* allowed us to benefit from drawing down income to cover some of our staff costs. We continued to make savings by running activities online and by undertaking project management work for organisations within our sector.

Reserves policy and risks
The Charity is constantly reviewing its cost base and implementing efficiencies with a view to maintaining liquid reserves to the equivalent of the level of annual funding from Arts Council England, a figure of £184K. The free reserves as at 31 March 2022 which were £246,835, are higher than currently recommended by the reserves policy, although given the potential impact of increased cost of living and a potential recession, it is likely that the reserves level will be increased by the Finance & Resources Sub-Committee.

Going Concern
The Trustees have reviewed the long-term viability of the Charity on a regular basis, particularly in light of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the increased cost of living. The 2021/2022 year has demonstrated that much work can continue to be delivered on digital platforms, but that in-person and hybrid events are regaining popularity. In addition, Arts Council England have confirmed their intention to offer standstill funding for the period 2023 to 2026. This, together with the high level of reserves and the Charity's ability to function flexibly, has led the Trustees to feel confident that the Charity is a Going Concern with very modest risks over the next three years.

Risk management statement
The Trustees have continued to work on the development of its risk management strategy which has included an annual review of the risks that the charity may face. The Trustees have continued working on formalising the documentation of systems and procedures in place to mitigate those risks identified in the review and implementing any required further procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should the risks materialise.

The key risks and uncertainties that have been identified and are being managed are:

- Personnel – loss of key staff, poor management of staff, impact of Covid-19
- Governance – lack of appropriate trustee-level skills, poor reporting to Trustees
- Artistic Programme & Policy – low artistic quality, poor diversity levels, impact of Covid-19
- Delivery – inappropriate venues, poor marketing, impact of Covid-19
- Financial – key funding not forthcoming, low contributed income, increased costs across all areas
- Systems – poor IT management, failure of systems
- Child Protection – poor child-safeguarding policy implementation

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

Writing West Midlands Limited is a company limited by guarantee and was registered as a charity on 15 June 2012. The Charitable Company is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association which were adopted by the Board of Trustees on 13 March 2012.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Appointment of Trustees, induction & training

New Trustees are appointed by invitation to join the Board given that they have the necessary skills and experience to contribute to the Trust's activities and to be able to discharge their obligations as Trustees. Prospective new Trustees meet initially with the Chair and Chief Executive and are then invited to observe a meeting of the Board of Trustees, at which they are given all relevant papers, including financial reports. A document produced by the Charity Commission on the responsibilities of Trustees is also provided. Subject to the prospective Trustee and the Board of Trustees being in favour of membership a Resolution is issued and voted on at a Board Meeting. The two longest serving Trustees are required to submit themselves for re-election annually.

Trustees are encouraged to attend a range of our activities, including the Birmingham Literature Festival and our work with young writers. In addition to attending quarterly Board Meetings and an AGM, Trustees are required to join at least one of our sub-committees (Finance, Personnel, Artistic, Marketing, Contributed Income, Diversity and Young Writers). Trustees are asked to complete a Conflict of Interest Declaration.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees:
Ms Olwen Brown (nee Dutton) (Chair)
Professor Gregory Leadbetter
Ms Hannah Clifford (resigned 1 October 2021)
Ms Helen Cross (resigned 1 December 2021)
Professor Oluwafemi Oyebode (resigned 1 October 2021)
Ms Maeve Clarke
Mr John Roberts
Dr Ceri Morgan (resigned 12 May 2021)
Mr George D Bastow
Dr Lisa Blower
Ms Nikki Bi
Mr Robert Elkington (appointed 1 December 2021)
Ms Laura A Willis (appointed 1 December 2021)
Mr Thomas E Glave (appointed 5 December 2021)

Company Secretary:
vacant

Charity Number: 1147710

Company number: 06264124

Registered Office:
Studio 130, Zellig,
Gibb Street
Birmingham
B9 4AT

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Independent Examiner:
Karen Hanlan, ACA
Karen Hanlan Independent Examiner Ltd
1 Saracen Close
Ettington
CV37 7SZ

Bankers:
The Co-operative Bank p.l.c.
PO Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester
M60 4EP

Approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by:

Olwen Brown
Trustee

Date: Wednesday 9th November 2022

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charitable company and of the surplus or deficit incurred by the charitable company for that year. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue to exist.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the charitable company has an appropriate system of controls, financial and otherwise.

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

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for

the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and to provide reasonable assurance that:

- the charitable company is operating efficiently and effectively;
- its assets are safeguarded against un-authorised use or disposition;
- proper records are maintained, and financial information used within the charity or for publication is reliable;
- the charitable company complies with relevant laws and regulations.

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Writing West Midlands Ltd ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2022 which are set out on pages 14 to 28.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3) the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4) the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

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

Karen Hanlan,
Member of Institute of Chartered Accountants England & Wales
Karen Hanlan Independent Examiner Ltd
1 Saracen Close
Ettington
Warwickshire
CV37 7SZ

Date: Wednesday 9th November 2022

Statement of Financial Activities (including an Income & Expenditure Account)

	Note	Un-restricted funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022	Total 2021
Income from:		**£**	**£**	**£**	£
Donations and legacies	1	**188,465**	**2,400**	**190,865**	195,803
Charitable Activities	2	**35,086**	**241,397**	**276,483**	81,951
Trading Activities	3	**-**	**-**	**-**	840
Investments – bank interest		**933**	**-**	**933**	991
Total income		**224,484**	**243,797**	**468,281**	**279,585**
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	4	**18,504**	**-**	**18,504**	16,236
Charitable activities	5	**197,200**	**242,045**	**439,245**	222,882
Total Expenditure		**215,704**	**242,045**	**457,749**	**239,118**
Net income and net movement in funds for year		**8,780**	**1,752**	**10,532**	**40,467**
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		243,131	1,060	244,191	203,724
Transfer of funds		(2,619)	2,619	-	-
Total funds carried forward		**249,292**	**5,431**	**254,723**	**244,191**

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

Balance sheet

Company registered number 06264124	Notes	2022	2021
		£	£
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	9	**2,457**	771
Current Assets			
Debtors	10	**51,316**	73,619
Cash at bank and in hand		**237,313**	298,772
		288,629	372,391
Current Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	**(36,363)**	(128,971)
Net current assets		**252,266**	243,420
Net assets		**254,723**	244,191
The funds of the Charity:			
Restricted Funds	12	**5,431**	1,060
Unrestricted Funds	12	**249,292**	243,131
Total charity funds		**254,723**	**244,191**

The accompanying accounting policies and notes form part of these financial statements.

For the year ended 31 March 2022 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Responsibilities of directors/Trustees:

(a) The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006 - however, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 the financial statements have been examined by an independent examiner whose report appears on page 13.

(b) The directors/Trustees acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

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

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by: Date: Wednesday 9th November 2022
Olwen Brown, Trustee

Principal accounting policies

Status of the company
The charitable company is limited by guarantee and does not have share capital. The liability of members is limited to £1 per member.

Basis of preparation
The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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 (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Writing West Midlands meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

Going concern statement
The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis which assumes that the Charitable Company will continue to operate. The validity of this assumption is dependent upon the continuance of support from the Charitable Company's key grant funder (Arts Council England), which was confirmed on 4th November 2022 with an announcement that regular funding would continue at the agreed level until March 2026, and in response to the progress made by the Charitable Company in pursuing a viable budget including the obtaining of further grants and other funds. The Charitable Company's current business plan shows that the Charitable Company will be able to operate in the foreseeable future. Based on this understanding, the directors believe that it remains appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. The financial statements do not include any adjustments, which would result from the basis of preparation being inappropriate.

Funds
Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations and grants subject to conditions imposed by the provider or by specific terms of the appeal under which the funds were raised. The restrictive conditions are binding upon the Charitable Company.

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

Income relating to future periods, as a result of donor imposed conditions specifying the time period, has been treated as deferred income.

Income dependent on certain conditions, amounting to more than mere administrative requirements, is recognised when the conditions have been fulfilled.

Principal accounting policies (continued)

Donated services and facilities
Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charitable company of the item is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP FRS102, general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charitable company which is the amount the charitable company would have been willing to pay to obtain the services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Interest receivable
Bank interest is shown on the basis of amounts receivable in the year.

Expenditure
Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charitable company to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds comprises the costs of staff time, publicity and other costs associated with raising income and includes an allocation of associated support & governance costs.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of festivals and events, Writer Development and Young Writers programmes undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support & governance costs.

Allocation of support costs
Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charitable company but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charities activities. These costs have been allocated between costs of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities and have been allocated based on the amount of time spent by staff on each area of activity.

Tangible fixed assets
Depreciation is provided at a rate calculated to write off the cost on a straight line basis over a period of less than the estimated useful life of the assets as follows:

Computer equipment, Office equipment & furniture	33% per annum

Fixed asset purchases above £500 are capitalised.

Cash and cash equivalents
Cash and cash equivalents include cash at bank and in hand and short term deposits repayable on within a three month notice period.

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

Principal accounting policies (continued)

Creditors
Creditors are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

Taxation
As a registered charity no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

Pension costs
The charity contributes into a Group Personal Pension Plan for employees. This pension plan is defined contribution in nature and as required under FRS102 the annual cost is recognised as incurred and included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Notes to the financial statements

1. Income from donations and legacies

	2022	2021
	£	£
Un-restricted:		
Arts Council England – National Portfolio Funding	**184,375**	184,375
Donations (Including Friends)	**970**	428
Gifts in kind	**3,120**	-
Grants – Birmingham City Council COVID relief	**-**	10,000
Total un-restricted grants & donations	**188,465**	194,803
Restricted grants:		
Grimmitt Trust	**-**	1,000
Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society	**2,400**	-
Total restricted grants	**2,400**	1,000
Total income from donations and legacies	**190,865**	195,803

Gifts in kind relate to donated facilities and services provided by other organisations to enable Writing West Midlands to carry out its activities. They comprise venue costs in relation to events and workshops. Due to a lack of external activities in 2020/21 there were no such gifts in that year.

2. Income from charitable activities

	2022	2021
Restricted grants:	£	£
EU- Creative Europe Project	**41,308**	38,233
Coventry City of Culture & The British Council	**200,089**	5,910
Total restricted grants	**241,397**	44,143
Un-restricted income:		
Festivals & events	**5,127**	1,849
Writer development	**16,870**	19,418
Work with Young Writers & schools	**9,988**	9,741
Other earned income	**3,101**	6,800
Total un-restricted income	**35,086**	37,808
Total income from Charitable Activities	**276,483**	81,951

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

3. Income from trading activities

Income from trading activities relates to sponsorship from organisations supporting the Birmingham Literature Festival and other events and workshops.

4. Analysis of expenditure on raising funds

	2022	2021
	£	£
Staff costs	**11,019**	10,293
Printing, publicity & marketing costs	**537**	357
Allocation of support costs	**5,836**	4,621
Allocation of governance costs	**1,112**	965
Total cost of raising funds	**18,504**	16,236

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

5. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	Festivals & Events	Writer development	Young Writers	2022 Total
	£	£	£	£
Direct operating and programming costs	18,773	14,560	20,640	**55,263**
Direct production costs of READ ON project	-	-	29,171	**29,171**
Coventry City of Culture Contains Strong Language Festival	193,398	-	-	**193,398**
Bursaries	-	1,290	-	**1,290**
Marketing, printing & publicity	7,520	1,074	1,612	**10,206**
Staff costs	40,924	19,190	32,620	**92,734**
Support costs	21,676	10,164	17,278	**49,118**
Governance costs	4,128	1,936	3,291	**9,355**
Total 2021/22	**286,419**	**48,214**	**104,612**	**439,245**

Expenditure on charitable activities includes £193,845 (2021: £172,899) relating to un-restricted funds and £242,045 (2021: £49,983) relating to restricted funds. Direct operating and programming costs includes gifts in kind of £3,120 (2021 £nil) in relation to venues provided for Young Writers Groups, the conference and summer schools free of charge. Support & governance costs have been allocated across activity categories in accordance with time spent by staff in those areas.

	Festivals & Events	Writer development	Young Writers	2021 Total
	£	£	£	£
Direct operating and programming costs	11,749	14,411	21,258	**47,418**
Direct production costs of READ ON project	-	-	18,519	**18,519**
Coventry City of Culture Contains Strong Language Festival	5,100	-	-	**5,100**
Bursaries	-	2,125	-	**2,125**
Marketing, printing & publicity	5,003	715	1,072	**6,790**
Staff costs	36,677	18,657	32,218	**87,552**
Support costs	19,396	7,986	18,426	**45,808**
Governance costs	4,051	1,669	3,850	**9,570**
Total 2020/21	**81,976**	**45,563**	**95,343**	**222,882**

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

6. Analysis of support and governance costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2022 Total
	£	£	£
Staff costs	**17,689**	**8,622**	**26,311**
Staff training, travel & subsistence	**1,460**	**-**	**1,460**
Office costs	**34,531**	**-**	**34,531**
Depreciation	**1,274**	**-**	**1,274**
Legal & professional fees	**-**	**48**	**48**
Independent Examiners fees	**-**	**1,650**	**1,650**
Trustee meeting costs	**-**	**147**	**147**
Total 2021/22	**54,954**	**10,467**	**65,421**

	Support costs	Governance costs	2021 Total
	£	£	£
Staff costs	**9,579**	**7,990**	**17,569**
Staff training, travel & subsistence	**401**	**-**	**401**
Office costs	**25,368**	**-**	**25,368**
New website development	**6,000**	**-**	**6,000**
Depreciation	**609**	**-**	**609**
Accountancy fees	**8,472**	**942**	**9,414**
Legal & professional fees	**-**	**53**	**53**
Independent Examiners fees	**-**	**1,550**	**1,550**
Total 2020/21	**50,429**	**10,535**	**60,964**

7. Net income for the year

	2022	2021
Net income for the year is stated after charging:	**£**	£
Depreciation	**1,274**	609
Independent examiners fees -		
Independent examination	**1,250**	1,200
Accountancy services	**400**	350

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

8. Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses

	2022	2021
	£	£
Salaries	**120,561**	106,685
National Insurance	**5,159**	4,178
Pension	**4,344**	4,551
Total	**130,064**	115,414

Staff Numbers

	Number	Number
Average number of full-time equivalent excluding Trustees	3.7	3.4

No employees had employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2021: nil).

The charitable company's trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year, other than that noted in note 14 on page 27. No Trustee expenses were reimbursed during the year (2021: £nil).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive. Trustees receive no remuneration or other benefits from the charity. The remuneration of key management personnel (excluding pension contributions) for the year was £39,013 (2021: £38,262).

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

9. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer Equipment £	Furniture, Fixture, & Fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At beginning of year	12,947	1,615	14,562
Additions	2,960	-	2,960
At end of year	15,907	1,615	17,522
Depreciation			
At beginning of year	12,176	1,615	13,791
Charge for the year	1,274	-	1,274
At end of year	13,450	1,615	15,065
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2022	**2,457**	**-**	**2,457**
At 31 March 2021	771	-	771

10. Debtors

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade debtors	**5,763**	67,141
Other debtors	**2,880**	2,893
Prepayments	**5,323**	3,585
Accrued income	**37,350**	-
	51,316	73,619

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade creditors	**2,666**	14,119
Taxation and social security	**1,703**	2,437
Deferred income	**27,698**	110,095
Accruals	**4,296**	2,320
	36,363	128,971

Deferred income:	**2022**	2021
	£	£
Balance brought forward	**110,095**	92,104
Transferred to statement of financial activities	**(89,514)**	(40,491)
Deferred in year	**7,117**	58,482
Balance at end of year	**27,698**	110,095

Deferred income relates to grants and fees received in advance of the period to which they relate.

12. Funds

2021/22	Balance at beginning of year £	**Income £**	**Expenditure £**	**Transfers £**	**Balance at end of year £**
Restricted funds					
Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society	2,250	2,400	(4,650)	**-**	**-**
Contains Strong Language Festival	(1,190)	200,089	(193,468)	**-**	**5,431**
EU- Creative Europe Project	-	41,308	(43,927)	**2,619**	**-**
	1,060	243,797	(242,045)	**2,619**	**5,431**
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	243,131	224,484	(215,704)	**(2,619)**	**249,292**
Total	244,191	468,281	(457,749)	**-**	**254,723**

Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society – Funding received to support attendance at the National Writers' Conference for Room 204 participants. The 2020 conference was postponed due to Covid-19 and funding was used to cover attendance at the 2021 conference.

Contains Strong Language Festival – Funded by the Arts Council England, Coventry City of Culture Trust and the British Council for events in 2021 as part of Coventry's City of Culture. Arts Council England have agreed for unspent funding to be applied to activities in Coventry in July 2022.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

EU –Creative Europe Project – READ ON, a Creative Europe funded project with seven international partners, developed to encourage young people aged 12 to 19 to engage with Creative Writing and Creative Reading, and taking place between June 2017 and August 2021. Following delays due to Covid-19 this was extended to November 2021.

2020/21	Balance at beginning of year £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at end of year £
Restricted funds					
Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society	2,250	-	-	**-**	**2,250**
Tindal Street Press	1,610	-	(1,610)	**-**	**-**
Contains Strong Language Festival	-	5,910	(7,100)	**-**	**(1,190)**
EU- Creative Europe Project	-	38,233	(40,273)	**2,040**	**-**
Grimmitt Trust towards Young Writers Groups	-	1,000	(1,000)	**-**	**-**
	3,860	45,143	(49,983)	**2,040**	**1,060**
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	199,864	234,442	(189,135)	**(2,040)**	**243,131**
Total	203,724	279,585	(239,118)	**-**	**244,191**

13. Analysis of net assets between funds

2021/22	Un-restricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Fixed assets	**2,457**	**-**	**2,457**
Debtors	**51,316**	**-**	**51,316**
Cash at bank and in hand	**211,301**	**26,012**	**237,313**
Creditors	**(15,782)**	**(20,581)**	**(36,363)**
Funds	**249,292**	**5,431**	**254,723**

2020/21	Un-restricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Fixed assets	**771**	**-**	**771**
Debtors	**73,619**	**-**	**73,619**
Cash at bank and in hand	**194,609**	**104,163**	**298,772**
Creditors	**(25,868)**	**(103,103)**	**(128,971)**
Funds	**243,131**	**1,060**	**244,191**

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

14. Related party transactions

Fees & expenses were paid to three Trustees for services provided to train writers to work with children and to lead creative writing workshops and short courses, as follows:

H Cross	£nil	(2021: £1,450)
G Bastow	£450	(2021: £100)
L Blower	£175	(2021: £nil)
T Glave	£1,025	(2021: £nil)

Midland Creative Projects Limited, a Company owned and controlled by the Chief Executive, paid Writing West Midlands £1,612.50 (2021: £nil) for its involvement with the Read On Creative Europe Project. In addition, total expenses of £588.08 (2021: £455.28) were reimbursed to Midland Creative Projects relating to expenditure incurred on behalf of Writing West Midlands.

The Articles of Association allow payments to Trustees for the supply of services in connection with the charitable company's charitable activities.

15. Operating lease commitments

The total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows	**2022**	2021
Expiring:	**£**	£
- Within one year	**-**	-
- Between two and five years	**-**	-

16. Controlling Interests

The charity is controlled by the Trustees.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

17. Prior year comparative Statement of Financial Activities

	Un-restricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total 2021
Income from:	**£**	**£**	£
Donations and legacies	**194,803**	**1,000**	**195,803**
Charitable Activities	**37,808**	**44,143**	**81,951**
Trading Activities	**840**	**-**	**840**
Investments	**991**	**-**	**991**
Total income	**234,442**	**45,143**	**279,585**
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	**16,236**	**-**	**16,236**
Charitable activities	**172,899**	**49,983**	**222,882**
Total Expenditure	**189,135**	**49,983**	**239,118**
Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds for year	**45,307**	**(4,840)**	**40,467**
Reconciliation of funds			
Total funds brought forward	199,864	3,860	203,724
Transfer of funds	(2,040)	2,040	-
Total funds carried forward	**243,131**	**1,060**	**244,191**

WRITING WEST MIDLANDS LTD

England & Wales - Charity number 1147710

Accounts

Writing West Midlands Ltd

(a Company Limited by Guarantee)

Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

Registered Company number 06264124

Registered Charity number 1147710

Index

	Page
Report of the Trustees	3-10
Statement of Trustees responsibilities	11
Report of the independent examiner	12
Statement of financial activities (incorporating an Income & Expenditure Account)	13
Balance sheet	14
Principal Accounting Policies	15-17
Notes to the financial statements	17-26

Report of the Trustees

The directors of Writing West Midlands Ltd ("the charitable company") are its Trustees for the purpose of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as its Trustees. The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, 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 (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019).

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting the charitable company's report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The objects of the Charity, as set out in its Memorandum and Articles of Association, are to advance education in the arts for the public benefit by promotion of creative writing, in particular but not exclusively in the UK's West Midlands region.

To achieve these objects we have a series of **Objectives**, as follows:

Workforce/Talent Development - Workforce/Talent Development activities develop the skills and talents of creative writers in all genres and forms.

Artform/Sector Development - Artform/Sector Development activities challenge and support the literature sector to develop the highest quality of creative writing.

Participation/Market Development - Participation/Market Development activities encourage emerging and established writers to participate in opportunities created or signposted.

Audience/Readership Development - Audience/Readership Development activities develop audiences/readers for new writers and their work.

Young People Engagement - Young People Engagement activities offer children and young people the opportunity to develop as creative writers.

Regional Development - Regional Development activities promote writing in the West Midlands in partnership with national and international organisations.

National/International Development - National and International Development activities develop the national offer for literature development and create opportunities for our writers to work beyond the UK.

Organisational Development - Organisational Development activities improve the way we run our organisation, including developing staff, volunteers and our Board of Trustees.

Our pursuit of these **Objectives** is informed by our commitment to Arts Council England's Let's Create Strategy and its Investment Principles. **Objectives** are delivered through activities across four main areas of work, along with work to support our Governance, Management and Organisational Development. These four areas of work and their activities are as follows:

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Writer Development

We support emerging and established writers with a programme of events and activities. This includes our annual writer networking conference (The National Writers' Conference), our Room 204 Writer Development Scheme and regular one-to-one advice and guidance sessions. We offer universities bespoke Creative Writing Career Seminars for their students.

We run a year-round programme of writing workshops and short-courses and other creative writing activities, including commissions. We work with other organisations, for instance the British Council, to create commissioning opportunities for writers. We make links with writing communities outside the UK to develop opportunities for writers in our region. We also run regional networks of university creative writing courses, literary translators and independent literary publishers.

Young Writers

We work with children and young people to develop their interest in creative writing, largely through out of school activities but also in partnership with schools. This includes running our network of Spark Young Writers' Groups, arranging creative writing workshops in schools, publishing an online creative writing magazine for young writers and running our Spark Young Writers' Summer Writing Challenge.

We are a partner in READ ON!, a programme to support young people's engagement with creative writing and reading, funded through the European Union's Creative Europe programme from 2017 to 2021.

Festival & Events

We develop audiences/readers for emerging and established writers and their work. This includes a literature festival – the Birmingham Literature Festival - and year-round events, in Birmingham and across the region. We work with partners to support other festivals, for instance the Contains Strong Language Coventry 2021 Festival. We also run a regional network of literature festival producers and provide on-going advice and guidance to other event organisers.

Reader Development

We manage the West Midlands Readers' Network, an Arts Council England funded project that works with readers groups, public libraries and independent bookshops to provide support for 'creative reading'. This includes an annual online conference for public library and independent bookshop staff, a short story commissioning programme and an events programme for readers groups.

Governance, Management & Organisational Development

We work constantly to improve the ways in which our organisation is governed, managed and organised. This includes offering training for staff, for volunteers and for our Board of Trustees, regular updating of our policies and systems, including our financial management and IT management.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

When reviewing and planning activities over the year, Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'. In order to broaden access and achieve our stated aims we set costs of attendance and participation at the lowest possible level and offer many events, activities and services at no cost.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The period of this Report was entirely within the Covid-19 pandemic which considerably impacted on our work.

Writer Development

Our Writer Development work focussed on emerging writers requiring a range of support to develop and sustain their creative careers. This work included on-going sign-posting through social media, public events, training and one to one mentoring for those on our Room 204 Writer Development Scheme and others. This work was intensified from mid-March 2020 to assist writers in withstanding the professional and personal impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Room 204 Writer Development Programme & One to One Mentoring

All Room 204 activity took place online or by telephone. A further 15 emerging writers joined our Room 204 Writer Development Programme, selected from 155 applications, bringing the membership up to 143, including people from all 14 West Midlands local authority areas in the region. The Programme offered workshops, a creative writing critiquing scheme, one to one career mentoring and free entrance to our 2021 National Writers' Conference (for those newly joined).

Existing participants in the Programme continued to receive one to one mentoring and in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, our Chief Executive attempted to make contact with all Room 204 writers, offering additional one to one time and offering free use of our IT support contractors to assist with writers beginning to work online. The Room 204 Programme is unique in offering permanent and ongoing support to those who are selected to join. 100% of those on the Programme indicated a satisfaction level of good or excellent. One to one mentoring on all aspects of the writing industry was also offered to other writers and literature professionals and a total of 177 sessions were delivered during the year.

We continued to run a paid for mentoring programme for the regional publisher Nine Arches Press and had a smaller scale and free relationship with The Emma Press. Our work with the Contains Strong Language Coventry 2021 Festival, which began in January 2021, included a programme of writer development activities.

National Writers' Conference, Short Courses & Workshops

Our annual National Writers' Conference was cancelled because of Covid-19 restrictions. Our programme of short courses and workshops took place online. A total of 1015 people attended 74 training sessions and 1553 hours of training was provided. The satisfaction level for our short courses and workshops was 100% good or excellent.

All other Writer Development Initiatives took place online or by telephone. We recruited the Birmingham Poet Laureate 2020 – 22 (Casey Bailey) and the Birmingham Young Poet Laureate (Fatma Mohiuddin). We managed regional recruitment for writers from disadvantaged backgrounds to receive critical readings ('free reads') of creative writing through The Literacy Consultancy.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Other Writer Development Initiatives

We were partners in Historic England's 'High Street Tales' project, which commissioned new writing based on the history of Wednesbury High Street. We also commissioned Professor Thomas Glave to run a series of writing workshops responding to the experience of Covid-19, including for writers from the Black community.

We ran Creative Writing Careers Seminars for two universities in the region and ran a network for university creative writing courses in the region. We also ran networks of literary translators and independent literary publishers. We supported our Keele University and Birmingham City University Collaborative Doctoral Research Students as they began their PhDs.

Young Writers

All Young Writers work took place online or by telephone. Our work with young writers from age 8 upwards continued to be central to a significant element of our programme of activities. Most of this work was delivered through our Spark Young Writers Programme and our involvement in the READ ON! Creative Europe project.

Spark Young Writers Groups & Spark Young Writers Summer Writing Challenge

During the year we initially ran our 22 established Spark Young Writers Groups, although this number was reduced from September 2020 as demand for online activities reduced. We moved our five day Spark Young Writers Summer Writing Challenge online. We launched the Teen Writers Conference, a new initiative to support young people aged 14 to 25 with an interesting in making creative writing part of their careers. In totals we offered 140 training sessions and 2181 hours of engagement. Attenders at our activities for young writers came from 19 local authority areas, including all West Midlands areas and also other local authority areas. We offered 67 other Spark Young Writers activities (for instance Instagram writing prompts).

Publications

We published three online and one hardcopy editions of our Spark Young Writers Magazine, professionally edited and with contributions from young writers across the region. As part of the READ ON! project we received contributions – in translation where necessary – from young writers working with our partners in Norway, Portugal and Ireland. As part of the same project we published an Anthology of writing selected or commissioned by young people from the West Midlands, Italy, Norway and Portugal.

READ ON!, Creative Europe Project

Our participation in the Creative Europe funded READ ON! project to support young people's engagement with creative writing and reading continued through 2020/21, although taking place online. This included allowing schools groups to commission short stories from children's writers and production of anthologies of this work. We produced a guide to working with young people in drawing on our work on the *READ ON!* project and that of our partners.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Festivals & Events

All our Festival & Events work took place online. Our Festivals and Events work included the Birmingham Literature Festival, the Contains Strong Language Coventry 2021 Festival (preparation for which began in Spring 2020) and some year-round events and related activity.

Birmingham Literature Festival & Year-Round Events

The Birmingham Literature Festival was refocused from a 10 day in-person event to a series of online events and activities taking place across the financial year, with a focus on events through October 2020. These events and activities included podcasts, livestreamed events, video recorded events and audio commissions. A total of 35 events and activities were presented, with audiences and participants in various forms totalling 6374. 102 writers and other performers were involved.

Reader Development

All Reader Development work took place online or by telephone. We continued our management of the West Midlands Readers' Network programme and ran our first The Librarians' Virtual Toolkit Conference in November 2020, an online version of our The Librarians' Toolkit. This online version was viewed – live and subsequently – by 525 people, including from across the UK and internationally.

The West Midlands Readers' Network continued with a scheme to allow a readers group to commission emerging and established writers to write a short story for their group. Four readers groups took up this opportunity, with a booklet of the short stories due to be published in Autumn 2021. Other online activity for readers groups was promoted, including an intensive one day 'reading salon' focussing on contemporary poetry, a number of online writers visits to readers groups and 'readers in residence' projects.

An application for the West Midlands Readers Network to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation was submitted to the Charity Commission.

FUTURE PLANS

Our focus will continue on our four main areas of work – Festival & Events, Writer Development, Young Writers and Reader Development. These are all still affected by the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and we will manage carefully returning to in-person events and try to create hybrid events if possible. The Birmingham Literature Festival will remain a flag-ship project. This will be supplemented by other activities, including our work with The British Council and the conclusion of our involvement in READ ON! Supporting the four regional networks we run will continue to be important as will sustaining and developing our international work.

Our work to support individual writers will continue, with our National Writers' Conference, our Room 204 Writer Development Scheme and our one to one mentoring. Our Short Course and Workshop programme will continue and we will look to broaden the range presented. We will support other on-going writer development initiatives, including The Literacy Agency free-read scheme. All activity will be presented as a combination of online and in-person.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Work with children and young people will remain an important and long-term focus. We will continue to run a reduced programme of online and in-person Spark Young Writers Groups and to offer training to our Lead and Assistant Writers. We will present our Spark Young Writers' Summer Writing Challenge online and continue to publish our on-line creative writing magazine for young writers.

Organisationally our main challenge will be to learn to manage delivery both online and in-person while starting to re-generate earned and contributed income. We will consider continuing to invest in poetry activity in Coventry following the Contains Strong Language Coventry 2021 Festival and we will respond to a number of other partnership opportunities currently being offered.

Our various systems, including personnel and financial management and marketing, will be subject to continual development. We are close to adopting a new Customer Relationship Management system for the organisation, which will help streamline how we communicate with many individuals and organisations. We will continue to recruit and train volunteers, particularly for our work with our Spark Young Writers' Groups and our festivals and events.

All our work will continue to be affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, although we anticipate that our ability to migrate work on to digital platforms will help us to continue to offer a full range of events and activities to writers. We will continue to work with individual writers, particularly through our one to one mentoring and especially for those who may be vulnerable for various reasons as a result of the pandemic.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

A surplus of £40,467 (2020 £30,811) was reported for the year. This increased total funds as at 31 March 2021, which now stand at £244,191 compared to £203,724 at the prior period end. While we experienced a reduction in earned income, this was more than matched by a considerable reduction in activity costs due to activities transferring to online platforms. Cancelling our National Writers Conference, running our Spark Young Writers work on line and our Birmingham Literature Festival online, all reduced costs. We also continued to benefit from posting a portion of our staff time spent on our Spark Young Writers programme against the *READ ON!* project.

Reserves policy and risks

The Charity is constantly reviewing its cost base and implementing efficiencies with a view to maintaining liquid reserves to the equivalent of the level of annual funding from Arts Council England, a figure of £184K. The free reserves as at 31 March 2021 which were £239,360, are higher than currently recommended by the reserves policy, although given the potential impact of the Covid-19 pandemic it is likely that the reserves level will be increased by the Finance & Resources Sub-Committee.

Going Concern

The Trustees have reviewed the long-term viability of the Charity on a regular basis, particularly in light of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The 2020/2021 year has demonstrated that much work can be delivered on digital platforms and that reductions in income has been generally more than matched by reductions in costs. In addition, Arts Council England have confirmed their intention to extend their current funding agreement period by one year, to March 2024, with, therefore, an additional year's funding at existing levels. This, together with the high level of reserves and the Charity's ability to function despite Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, has led the Trustees to feel confident that the Charity is a Going Concern with very modest risks over the next three years.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

Risk management statement

The Trustees have continued to work on the development of its risk management strategy which has included an annual review of the risks that the charity may face. The Trustees have continued working on formalising the documentation of systems and procedures in place to mitigate those risks identified in the review and implementing any required further procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should the risks materialise.

The key risks and uncertainties that have been identified and are being managed are:

- Personnel – loss of key staff, poor management of staff, impact of Covid-19
- Governance – lack of appropriate trustee-level skills, poor reporting to Trustees
- Artistic Programme & Policy – low artistic quality, poor diversity levels, impact of Covid-19
- Delivery – inappropriate venues, poor marketing, impact of Covid-19
- Financial – key funding not forthcoming, low contributed income
- Systems – poor IT management, failure of systems
- Child Protection – poor child-safeguarding policy implementation

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

Writing West Midlands Limited is a company limited by guarantee and was registered as a charity on 15 June 2012. The Charitable Company is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association which were adopted by the Board of Trustees on 13 March 2012.

Appointment of Trustees, induction & training

New Trustees are appointed by invitation to join the Board given that they have the necessary skills and experience to contribute to the Trust's activities and to be able to discharge their obligations as Trustees. Prospective new Trustees meet initially with the Chair and Chief Executive and are then invited to observe a meeting of the Board of Trustees, at which they are given all relevant papers, including financial reports. A document produced by the Charity Commission on the responsibilities of Trustees is also provided. Subject to the prospective Trustee and the Board of Trustees being in favour of membership a Resolution is issued and voted on at a Board Meeting. The two longest serving Trustees are required to submit themselves for re-election annually.

Trustees are encouraged to attend a range of our activities, including the Birmingham Literature Festival and our work with young writers. In addition to attending quarterly Board Meetings and an AGM, Trustees are required to join at least one of our sub-committees (Finance, Personnel, Artistic, Marketing, Contributed Income, Diversity and Young Writers). Trustees are asked to complete a Conflict of Interest Declaration.

Report of the Trustees (continued)

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees:
Ms Olwen Brown (nee Dutton) (Chair)
Professor G Leadbetter
Ms C Phillips (Trusteeship terminated due to lack of attendance, April 2021)
Ms Hannah Clifford (resigned 1 October 2021)
Ms Helen Cross (resigned 1 November 2021)
Professor Oluwafemi Oyebode (resigned 1 October 2021)
Ms M Clarke
Mr J Roberts
Dr C Morgan (resigned 12 May 2021)
Mr GD Bastow
Dr L Blower
Ms N Bi

Company Secretary:
vacant

Charity Number: 1147710

Company number: 06264124

Registered Office:
Studio 130, Zellig,
Gibb Street
Birmingham
B9 4AT

Independent Examiner:
Karen Hanlan, ACA
Karen Hanlan Independent Examiner Ltd
12 Waterloo Close
Wellesbourne
CV35 9JG

Bankers:
The Co-operative Bank p.l.c.
PO Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester
M60 4EP

Approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by:

Olwen Brown
Trustee

Date: 10th November 2021

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charitable company and of the surplus or deficit incurred by the charitable company for that year. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue to exist.

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the charitable company has an appropriate system of controls, financial and otherwise.

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

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities and to provide reasonable assurance that:

- the charitable company is operating efficiently and effectively;
- its assets are safeguarded against un-authorised use or disposition;
- proper records are maintained, and financial information used within the charity or for publication is reliable;
- the charitable company complies with relevant laws and regulations.

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Writing West Midlands Ltd ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2021 which are set out on pages 13 to 26.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3) the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4) the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

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



Karen Hanlan,
Member of Institute of Chartered Accountants England & Wales
Karen Hanlan Independent Examiner Ltd
12 Waterloo Close
Wellesbourne
Warwickshire
CV35 9JG

Date: 10th November 2021

Statement of Financial Activities (including an Income & Expenditure Account)

	Note	Un-restricted funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total 2021	Total 2020
Income from:		£	£	£	£
Donations and legacies	1	**194,803**	**1,000**	**195,803**	199,076
Charitable Activities	2	**37,808**	**44,143**	**81,951**	140,175
Trading Activities	3	**840**	-	**840**	6,700
Investments – bank interest		**991**	-	**991**	1,571
Total income		**234,442**	**45,143**	**279,585**	**347,522**
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	4	**16,236**	-	**16,236**	16,075
Charitable activities	5	**172,899**	**49,983**	**222,882**	300,636
Total Expenditure		**189,135**	**49,983**	**239,118**	**316,711**
Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds for year		**45,307**	**(4,840)**	**40,467**	**30,811**
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		199,864	3,860	203,724	172,913
Transfer of funds		(2,040)	2,040	-	-
Total funds carried forward		**243,131**	**1,060**	**244,191**	**203,724**

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

Balance sheet

Company registered number 06264124

	Notes	2021	2020
		£	£
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	9	**771**	1,379
Current Assets			
Debtors	10	**73,619**	11,103
Cash at bank and in hand		**298,772**	296,221
		372,391	307,324
Current Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	**(128,971)**	(104,979)
Net current assets		**243,420**	202,345
Net assets		**244,191**	203,724
The funds of the Charity:			
Restricted Funds	12	**1,060**	3,860
Unrestricted Funds	12	**243,131**	199,864
Total charity funds		**244,191**	**203,724**

The accompanying accounting policies and notes form part of these financial statements.

For the year ended 31 March 2021 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Responsibilities of directors/Trustees:

(a) The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006 - however, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 the financial statements have been examined by an independent examiner whose report appears on page 12.

(b) The directors/Trustees acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

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

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:
Olwen Brown, Trustee

Date: 10th November 2021

Principal accounting policies

Status of the company
The charitable company is limited by guarantee and does not have share capital. The liability of members is limited to £1 per member.

Basis of preparation
The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 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 (FRS102) (updated 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Writing West Midlands meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

Going concern statement
The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis which assumes that the Charitable Company will continue to operate. The validity of this assumption is dependent upon the continuance of support from the Charitable Company's key grant funder (Arts Council England), which was confirmed in June 2017 and subsequently ratified in June 2020 with an announcement that regular funding would continue at the agreed level until March 2023, and in response to the progress made by the Charitable Company in pursuing a viable budget including the obtaining of further grants and other funds. The Charitable Company's current business plan shows that the Charitable Company will be able to operate in the foreseeable future. Based on this understanding, the directors believe that it remains appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. The financial statements do not include any adjustments, which would result from the basis of preparation being inappropriate.

Funds
Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations and grants subject to conditions imposed by the provider or by specific terms of the appeal under which the funds were raised. The restrictive conditions are binding upon the Charitable Company.

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

Income relating to future periods, as a result of donor imposed conditions specifying the time period, has been treated as deferred income.

Income dependent on certain conditions, amounting to more than mere administrative requirements, is recognised when the conditions have been fulfilled.

Principal accounting policies (continued)

Donated services and facilities
Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charitable company of the item is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP FRS102, general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charitable company which is the amount the charitable company would have been willing to pay to obtain the services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Interest receivable
Bank interest is shown on the basis of amounts receivable in the year.

Expenditure
Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charitable company to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds comprises the costs of staff time, publicity and other costs associated with raising income and includes an allocation of associated support & governance costs.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of festivals and events, Writer Development and Young Writers programmes undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support & governance costs.

Allocation of support costs
Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charitable company but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs which support the charities activities. These costs have been allocated between costs of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities and have been allocated based on the amount of time spent by staff on each area of activity.

Tangible fixed assets
Depreciation is provided at a rate calculated to write off the cost on a straight line basis over a period of less than the estimated useful life of the assets as follows:

Computer equipment, Office equipment & furniture	33% per annum

Fixed asset purchases above £500 are capitalised.

Cash and cash equivalents
Cash and cash equivalents include cash at bank and in hand and short term deposits repayable on within a three month notice period.

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

Principal accounting policies (continued)

Creditors
Creditors are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

Taxation
As a registered charity no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

Pension costs
The charity contributes into a Group Personal Pension Plan for employees. This pension plan is defined contribution in nature and as required under FRS102 the annual cost is recognised as incurred and included in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Notes to the financial statements

1. Income from donations and legacies

	2021	2020
	£	£
Un-restricted:		
Arts Council England – National Portfolio Funding	**184,375**	181,044
Donations (Including Friends)	**428**	707
Gifts in kind	**-**	13,250
Grants – Birmingham City Council COVID relief	**10,000**	-
Total un-restricted grants & donations	**194,803**	195,001
Restricted grants:		
Grimmitt Trust	**1,000**	1,000
Grantham Yorke Trust	**-**	1,275
University of Birmingham	**-**	800
The Cadbury Family Trust	**-**	1,000
Total restricted grants	**1,000**	4,075
Total income from donations and legacies	**195,803**	199,076

Gifts in kind relate to donated facilities and services provided by other organisations to enable Writing West Midlands to carry out its activities. They comprise venue costs in relation to events and workshops. Due to a lack of external activities in 2020/21 there were no such gifts in that year.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

2. Income from charitable activities

	2021	2020
Restricted grants:	£	£
Arts Council England - Catalyst Arts Funding – Capacity Building	-	1,590
Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society	-	2,250
EU- Creative Europe Project	**38,233**	41,365
Coventry City of Culture & The British Council	**5,910**	-
Total restricted grants	**44,143**	45,205
Un-restricted income:		
Arts Council England - Catalyst Arts Funding – Match funding	-	9,386
Festivals & events	**1,849**	38,832
Sale of books & merchandise	-	1,268
Writer development	**19,418**	21,359
Work with Young Writers & schools	**9,741**	12,338
Other earned income	**6,800**	11,787
Total un-restricted income	**37,808**	94,970
Total income from Charitable Activities	**81,951**	140,175

3. Income from trading activities

Income from trading activities relates to sponsorship from organisations supporting the Birmingham Literature Festival and other events and workshops.

4. Analysis of expenditure on raising funds

	2021	2020
	£	£
Staff costs	**10,293**	9,832
Printing, publicity & marketing costs	**357**	1,406
Allocation of support costs	**4,621**	4,031
Allocation of governance costs	**965**	806
Total cost of raising funds	**16,236**	16,075

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

5. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	Festivals & Events	Writer development	Young Writers	2021 Total
	£	£	£	£
Direct venue and production costs	6,502	8,858	2,355	**17,715**
Direct writers' fees and expenses	5,247	5,553	18,903	**29,703**
Direct production costs of READ ON project	-	-	18,519	**18,519**
Coventry City of Culture Contains Strong Language Festival	5,100	-	-	**5,100**
Bursaries	-	2,125	-	**2,125**
Marketing, printing & publicity	5,003	715	1,072	**6,790**
Staff costs	36,677	18,657	32,218	**87,552**
Support costs	19,396	7,986	18,426	**45,808**
Governance costs	4,051	1,669	3,850	**9,570**
Total 2020/21	**81,976**	**45,563**	**95,343**	**222,882**

Expenditure on charitable activities includes £172,899 (2020: £250,664) relating to un-restricted funds and £49,983 (2020: £49,972) relating to restricted funds. Direct venue and production costs includes gifts in kind of £nil (2020 £13,250) in relation to venues provided for Young Writers Groups, the conference and summer schools free of charge. Support & governance costs have been allocated across activity categories in accordance with time spent by staff in those areas.

	Festivals & Events	Writer development	Young Writers	2020 Total
	£	£	£	£
Direct venue and production costs	17,808	17,532	2,959	**38,299**
Direct writers fees and expenses	25,406	12,784	32,654	**70,844**
Direct production costs of READ ON project	-	-	22,525	**22,525**
Freelancers fees	7,000	-	-	**7,000**
Marketing, printing & publicity	16,819	2,401	3,604	**22,824**
Staff costs	32,372	19,851	32,046	**84,269**
Support costs	22,245	7,863	15,626	**45,734**
Governance costs	4,446	1,572	3,123	**9,141**
Total 2019/20	**126,096**	**62,003**	**112,537**	**300,636**

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

6. Analysis of support and governance costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2021 Total
	£	£	£
Staff costs	9,579	7,990	17,569
Staff training, travel & subsistence	401	-	401
Office costs	25,368	-	25,368
New website development	6,000	-	6,000
Depreciation	609	-	609
Accountancy fees	8,472	942	9,414
Legal & professional fees	-	53	53
Independent Examiners fees	-	1,550	1,550
Total 2019/20	50,429	10,535	60,964

	Support costs	Governance costs	2020 Total
	£	£	£
Staff costs	9,174	7,635	16,809
Staff training, travel & subsistence	5,485	-	5,485
Office costs	27,318	-	27,318
Depreciation	372	-	372
Accountancy fees	7,416	824	8,240
Legal fees	-	13	13
Independent Examiners fees	-	1,475	1,475
Total 2019/20	49,765	9,947	59,712

7. Net expenditure for the year

Net expenditure for the year is stated after charging:	2021 £	2020 £
Depreciation	609	372
Independent examiners fees -		
Independent examination	1,200	1,200
Accountancy services	350	375

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

8. Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses

	2021	2020
	£	£
Salaries	**106,685**	103,266
National Insurance	**4,178**	4,866
Pension	**4,551**	2,778
Total	**115,414**	110,910

Staff Numbers

	Number	Number
Average number of full-time equivalent excluding Trustees	3.4	3.4

No employees had employee benefits in excess of £60,000 (2020: nil).

The charitable company's trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year. No Trustee expenses were reimbursed during the year (2020: £nil).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the trustees and the Chief Executive. Trustees receive no remuneration or other benefits from the charity. The remuneration of key management personnel (including pension contributions) for the year was £38,262 (2020: £36,933).

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

9. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer Equipment £	Furniture, Fixture, & Fittings £	Total £
Cost			
At beginning of year	12,947	1,615	14,562
Additions	-	-	-
At end of year	12,947	1,615	14,562
Depreciation			
At beginning of year	11,568	1,615	13,183
Charge for the year	608	-	608
At end of year	12,176	1,615	13,791
Net Book Value			
At 31 March 2021	**771**	**-**	**771**
At 31 March 2020	1,379	-	1,379

10. Debtors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade debtors	**67,141**	3,793
Other debtors	**2,893**	3,408
Prepayments	**3,585**	3,902
	73,619	11,103

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

11. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade creditors	**14,119**	8,615
Taxation and social security	**2,437**	2,256
Deferred income	**110,095**	92,104
Accruals	**2,320**	2,004
	128,971	104,979

Deferred income:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Balance brought forward	**92,104**	37,080
Transferred to statement of financial activities	**(40,491)**	(47,235)
Deferred in year	**58,482**	102,259
Balance at end of year	**110,095**	92,104

Deferred income relates to grants and fees received in advance of the period to which they relate.

12. Funds

2020/21	Balance at beginning of year £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at end of year £
Restricted funds					
Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society	2,250	-	-	-	**2,250**
Tindal Street Press	1,610	-	(1,610)	-	-
Contains Strong Language Festival	-	5,910	(7,100)	-	**(1,190)**
EU- Creative Europe Project	-	38,233	(40,273)	**2,040**	-
Grimmitt Trust towards Young Writers Groups	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
	3,860	45,143	(49,983)	**2,040**	**1,060**
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	199,864	234,442	(189,135)	**(2,040)**	**243,131**
Total	203,724	279,585	(239,118)	-	**244,191**

Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society – Funding received to support attendance at the National Writers' Conference for Room 204 participants. The 2020 conference was postponed due to Covid-19. Funding will support attendance at the 2021 conference.

Tindall Street Press – Payment received on winding down of Tindal Street Press to be used for a future literary prize. It was agreed during the year to pay the funds to Tindal Street Fiction Group (who had originally founded the Press) to help them publish a book to celebrate 40 years of their work.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

Contains Strong Language Festival – Funded by the Arts Council England, Coventry City of Culture Trust and the British Council for events in 2021 as part of Coventry's City of Culture.

EU –Creative Europe Project – READ ON, a Creative Europe funded project with seven international partners, developed to encourage young people aged 12 to 19 to engage with Creative Writing and Creative Reading, and taking place between June 2017 and August 2021. Following delays due to Covid-19 this has been extended to November 2021.

2019/20	Balance at beginning of year £	Income £	Expenditure £	Balance at end of year £
Restricted funds				
Authors' Licensing & Collecting Society	-	2,250	-	**2,250**
Arts Council Catalyst funding	5,725	1,590	(7,315)	-
Tindal Street Press	1,610	-	-	**1,610**
The British Council	4,532	-	(4,532)	-
EU- Creative Europe Project	-	41,365	(41,365)	-
Various Trusts towards Young Writers Groups	-	4,075	(4,075)	-
	11,867	49,280	(57,287)	**3,860**
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	161,046	298,242	(259,424)	**199,864**
Total	172,913	347,522	(316,711)	**203,724**

Arts Council Catalyst Funding – Funding received to build capacity for securing of contributed income in the future.
The British Council – Funding received to run a writer commissioning programme with Punctum Magazine in Latvia.

13. Analysis of net assets between funds

2020/21	Un-restricted £	Restricted £	Total £
Fixed assets	**771**	-	**771**
Debtors	**73,619**	-	**73,619**
Cash at bank and in hand	**191,609**	**107,163**	**298,772**
Creditors	**(25,868)**	**(103,103)**	**(128,971)**
Funds	**240,131**	**4,060**	**244,191**

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

2019/20	Un-restricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£
Fixed assets	1,379	-	1,379
Debtors	11,103	-	11,103
Cash at bank and in hand	202,515	93,706	296,221
Creditors	(15,133)	(89,846)	(104,979)
Funds	199,864	3,860	203,724

14. Related party transactions

Fees & expenses were paid to three Trustees for services provided to train writers to work with children and to lead creative writing workshops and short courses, as follows:

H Cross	£1,450	(2020: £750)
G Leadbetter	£nil	(2020: £500)
G Bastow	£100	(2020: £nil)

Midland Creative Projects Limited, a Company owned and controlled by the Chief Executive, paid Writing West Midlands £nil (2020: £5,625) for its involvement with the 2019/20 Common People Writer Development Programme. In addition, total expenses of £455.28 (2020: £357.56) were reimbursed to Midland Creative Projects relating to expenditure incurred on behalf of Writing West Midlands.

The Articles of Association allow payments to Trustees for the supply of services in connection with the charitable company's charitable activities.

15. Operating lease commitments

The total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows

Expiring:	2021	2020
	£	£
- Within one year	-	14,010
- Between two and five years	-	-

16. Controlling Interests

The charity is controlled by the Trustees.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)

17. Prior year comparative Statement of Financial Activities

	Un-restricted funds 2020	Restricted funds 2020	Total 2020
Income from:	£	£	£
Donations and legacies	195,001	4,075	199,076
Charitable Activities	94,970	45,205	140,175
Trading Activities	6,700	-	6,700
Investments	1,571	-	1,571
Total income	298,242	49,280	347,522
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	8,760	7,315	16,075
Charitable activities	250,664	49,972	300,636
Total Expenditure	259,424	57,287	316,711
Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds for year	38,818	(8,007)	30,811
Reconciliation of funds			
Total funds brought forward	161,046	11,867	172,913
Total funds carried forward	199,864	3,860	203,724