



SIGNAL FILM & MEDIA ANNUAL REPORT

AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025





BFI Academy Film Shoot, Dec 2024



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WELCOME TO SIGNAL FILM & MEDIA...

We are an award winning charity based at Cooke's Studios on Abbey Road in Barrow-in-Furness, where we run activities in art, film and heritage. Since 2008, we have built a welcoming space that thousands of people from all walks of life have used to enjoy free events, get hands-on experience and take part in training in the creative industries.

This year we have started renovating our building to improve our welcome area, create a state of the art exhibition space and make our offices more accessible by moving them to the ground floor. We work closely with some of the most isolated and disadvantaged people in Barrow and across Cumbria, using creativity to help build confidence, skills and self esteem. Alongside our workshops and events, we also support artists through residences and mentoring - helping new local talent grow and strengthening the creative scene in our area.

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The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)(effective 1 January 2019)".



OBJECTIVES & ACTIVITIES

The charity's objects are for the public benefit to promote the arts and to advance education in the arts in particular but not exclusively by:

a) Providing a centre for the arts and creative industries where local residents, particularly these from disadvantaged groups, can access facilities and activities to develop skills in a diverse range of creative, media and arts disciplines, and:

b) Providing premises, space and activities for local front-line groups in order to support media production and the creative and artistic development of local people.

Activities undertaken for public benefit in relation to these objects

The policies adopted in furtherance of these objects are to implement a programme of film, media and digital arts training courses, masterclasses, screenings and workshops for adults and young people and there has been no change in these during the year.

As such the Trustees confirm that they have had due regard to the Charity Commission's published guidance on the 'public benefit' notice.

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

AIMS & APPROACH

We aim to achieve four overarching outcomes for our community through provision of arts and culture activity:

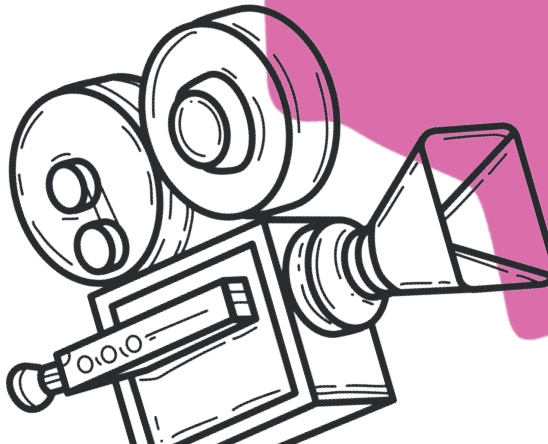
1. Connecting residents, old and young, to a wider world and diverse experiences
2. Providing skills training, advice and resources
3. Providing new cultural experiences and connecting people and communities
4. Supporting and encouraging personal and social development

We achieve these by delivering projects under 3 strands of activity:

Strand 1: Confident, Empowered Young People

Strand 2: A Connected Cultural Community

Strand 3: Skilled, Fulfilled Creatives



CO-DIRECTORS STATEMENT

We've had an exceptionally very busy year at Signal, delivering our expansive programme of community-focused digital arts, film and heritage activities alongside more hard work securing capital funding, working up architect plans and beginning construction on our long-anticipated refurbishment which will provide much improved access, a new welcome education area and improved exhibition and event spaces for our Barrow community.

Construction on this exciting £1.4m transformation project began in October 2024 and is set to be completed in Summer 2025. The building has remained open throughout the work and we've made strong progress on our delivery outcomes whilst simultaneously grappling with the challenges of the capital redevelopment alongside the impact of the cost of living crisis and increased demands on our services.

Our Arts Council NPO and NLHF grant funding, matched with core funding from various other supporters to underpin strategy and management, has allowed us to provide ambitious, impactful projects across our artists, community adults and youth engagement activities, increasing the depth of engagement for some of our most in-need residents.

We learned from and rolled out our co-creation models across our participatory projects and built new partnerships with funders, other local third sector organisations and schools. We turned the challenge of having less physical spaces in our building into the opportunity to hold more activities in off-site spaces which has opened up many new opportunities for engagement.

This year our permanent delivery team was able to rise to eight people, all of whom are extremely committed and talented and we're proud of the warm, inclusive, collaborative culture we've continued to maintain.

Our volunteers and steering groups have been instrumental in the continuing success of our National Lottery Heritage Funded work with the Sankey Archive, delivering public talks, curating events, producing podcasts, and mentoring fellow volunteers and participants. Their contributions have enriched the programme and supported the development of both artists and community members. Unfortunately we still haven't been able to replace our excellent fundraising/development lead, which has put pressure on the Directors, who whilst being experienced and able at fundraising have struggled for capacity. We are pleased to have secured a place on the ACE-backed Brave Futures scheme run by Arts Fundraising & Philanthropy in order to tackle some of that challenge.

Kerry Kolbe & Loren Slater, Co-directors, Signal



Building hoardings, Jan 2025

OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

1,858

YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

121

YOUTH SESSIONS
DELIVERED

575

ADULT PARTICIPANTS

224

ADULT SESSIONS
DELIVERED

85

CREATIVES
SUPPORTED

33

VOLUNTEERS
ENGAGED

17,615

IN PERSON AUDIENCES

129,500

ONLINE, OUTDOOR &
PRINT AUDIENCES

PROFILE RAISING & MEDIA COVERAGE

The Sankey Photo Archive continues to be celebrated as Barrow's most-treasured collection. We've had huge interest from local press – the North West Evening Mail has been running regular articles including images from the collection both online and in their publication, with over 21 articles produced between August 2024 and March 2025, sharing stories, navigating readers directly to our online archive.

Examples:

www.nwemail.co.uk/news/24849064.barrow-day-largest-naval-airship-world-split-half/



www.nwemail.co.uk/news/24758069.barrovians-flocked-frozen-lakes-ice-skate-100-years-ago/



We refreshed our 'Sankey Photography Archive' Facebook page in November 2024 – it is now led and run by our volunteers who regularly share photographs accompanied with histories and local insights. Sankey images are also shared though local Facebook groups like 'Memory Lane- old photos of Furness and Surrounding Areas & 'Barrow in Furness in old photos' where stories, memories and connections are reactively shared.

Our building refurbishment progress has been recognised by the local press as we work towards launching our new community spaces.

www.cumbriacrack.com/2025/02/05/revamp-of-barrow-landmark-building-makes-good-progress/



We've been successful in keeping up with an average engagement rate of 7.18% on Facebook and 9.38% on Instagram over the year, which is over 400% higher than industry averages! Our Instagram growth is also significantly stronger with a growth rate of 11.48% for new followers.

"One of the great things about working on the Sankey collection has been the opportunity to learn from others, such as facts about local history; and also to share information. It's satisfying when bits of information come together so a fuller story can be written up about an image."

(Sankey Volunteer)



SCREENINGS & AWARDS

One of our core principles is empowering local voices and showing world-class creativity can emerge from Barrow. By collaborating with film industry professionals and local people of all ages, projects made here in Barrow reach global audiences through selection in various film festivals. This year our short films featured at three different festivals worldwide:

WISHBONE

(2023, made by our team supported by a crew of local filmmaking trainees)
Working class teen Chrissie Fox refuses to relinquish her dream of being a photographer through a 60-year odyssey charting her life in small town Barrow-in-Furness (northern England) from 1960 to the present day.

Award-winning at: LA1 Shorts, April 2024

Quarter finalist at: Australian Independent Film Festival in the category of Short Film International (under 21 mins), Sept 2024



WATCH

HERE: www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6Gr44MaoP8



SUBSCRIBE



@signalfilmmedia

MILLIE AND JUNE

(2024, made by 16-19 year old BFI participants)

A mother and daughter are divided when a new man comes into their lives.

Screened at: Focus Wales Film Festival in the category of Narrative Short, Mar 2025



BFI, HOME Screening, Feb 2025

BFI workshop, Dec 2024

IMPACT GOAL 1: CONFIDENT, EMPOWERED YOUNG PEOPLE

Our year-round Youth Programme gives young people a pathway into work in the creative world. Starting with Signal Starters animation workshops for 8-11 year olds, participants can engage long term by progressing to digital arts and filmmaking sessions via Cooke's Crew (12-15 year olds) and Get Digital (16-25 year olds) through to the nationally acclaimed and accredited British Film Institute's Film Academy short course for 16-19 year olds.

We pride ourselves on creating an environment where young people feel nurtured and where participants have the opportunity to work with a varied and experienced range of practitioners from both the digital arts and film sector. Young people improve their skills and knowledge, grow in confidence and find their voice and a sense of empowerment through the creation of collaborative digital artworks, animations and short films. By strengthening our partnerships with organisations such as Dropzone and Queer Cumbria and with youth-focused artists such as Jack Brown and Casey Orr, we have provided a safe space for new and returning participants and have formed relationships with marginalised groups such as those from LGBTQ+ demographics and those that live with mental and physical health issues.

"Its allowed me to specialise in my preferred area as well as exploring new ones. I've also enjoyed meeting and working with other creatives."

Cooke's Crew, August 2024, Participant.

We have seen lots of participants returning to Signal this year, climbing the ladder of progression and also some who have moved on to higher education courses in the sector further afield, but returning to mentor and continuing to take part in the Youth Board. We had seven alumni return this summer to mentor during workshops, showcasing the skills they have learnt with us but also what they have experienced since, through their own personal progression. One mentor spent the summer Signal Starters animation sessions working 1:1 with young people to develop their model making skills and has since returned again as a paid staff member due to how particularly well received he was by the young people.



"It got me out of the house and made me feel wanted and had somewhere to go"

Casey Orr Photography workshops
Participant



Signal Starters, 2024

OUTREACH TASTER SESSIONS

Over the past year we have engaged 720 people through a wide range of sessions delivered across the community. Our outreach included visits to Furness College, Barrow Sixth Form, and Kendal College, where we showcased our programmes and connected with students. We also hosted drop in sessions at BAE Portland Walk, providing information about our workshops, and delivered a variety of family friendly activities throughout the summer.

As part of Barrow's 'Playcation' initiative we ran animation stations at two events located in Vickerstown Park and Ormsgill Community Centre - areas identified as among the most deprived in the town. In addition, we distributed 100 summer activity packs which were warmly received by local young people and their families.

A highlight of the year was our participation in Furness Pride. In collaboration with pop-up portrait photographer Casey Orr and supported by Stevie Westgarth from Queer Cumbria, we contributed to a vibrant event organised by Dropzone and their LGBTQ+ group 'True Colours'. Nearly 150 portraits were taken during the day, which will feature in Casey's future exhibitions and publications.

This year also marked the launch of 'Tiddlers', a new project developed in partnership with The Dock Museum, Family Action and Theatre Factory. Designed for children aged 0-4 years olds and their families, these light touch sessions introduce basic model making and storytelling, engaging an age group we had not previously reached.

"There isn't much provision for toddlers in Barrow so it is really great to have more options. It is amazing to come to something like this for free - thank you." Parent

"Sam loved using the playdough with Signal." Parent



"We loved exploring the museum and finding so much for kids to do. My daughter absolutely loved the animation"

Parent at Tiddlers Sessions at Dock Museum



THE
**DOCK
MUSEUM**
BARROW-IN-FURNESS



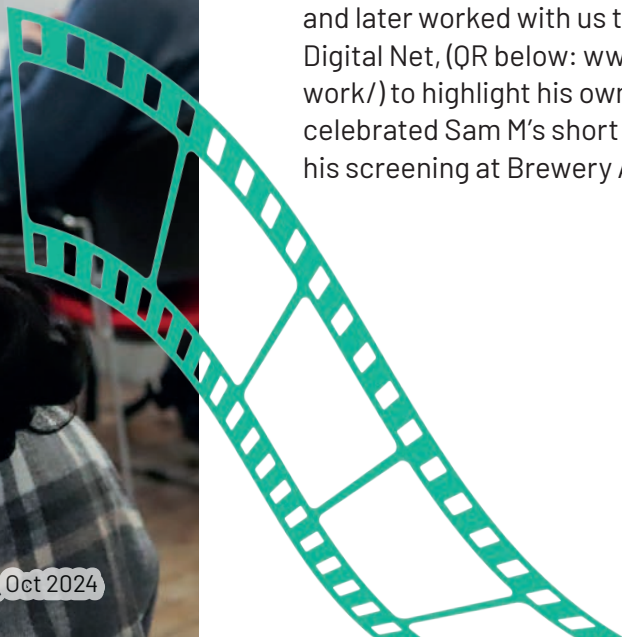


NEW YOUTH BOARD

Throughout the year our Youth Board has been developing their own objectives after expressing their desires to deliver activities and lead on mentoring younger people. They have plans to work more with the community and put into practice creative and professional skills, which so far has included members supporting delivery at Signal's stall with Casey Orr at Furness Pride in May 2024 and many joining our Get Digital and Cooke's Crew summer short courses as mentors to share their skills with our new participants.

We've been working with members individually to support their interests and personal progression. Spencer interviewed and was selected to be a Project Assistant, a 6-week internship funded as part of our 'Sankey Lives Through the Lens' Project. Spencer also worked with us to help deliver our Signal Starters workshops as a by-now well experienced model maker/sculptor. Having had Spencer join us on workshops since he was 8 years old - it's been wonderful to see his progression and to give him the opportunity for some professional development with Signal.

Sam H participated in artist Niki Colclough's series of workshops and later worked with us to lead on curation of an online exhibition, Digital Net, (QR below: www.signalfilmandmedia.com/participant-work/) to highlight his own and fellow participant's work. We also celebrated Sam M's short film online and taking a cohort to attend his screening at Brewery Arts in August 2024.



INTEGRATING YOUTH & ADULT PROGRAMMES

Over the past year we developed a range of family orientated drop-in activities designed to connect with the broader themes of our programme. These included interactive experiences with green screens and photography sessions using the Sankey Archive for inspiration; Playcation animation workshops featured a hand painted backdrop inspired by historical imagery from the Archive. 100 summer activity packs were distributed, containing designs and creative exercises drawn from the Archive. These elements offered younger participants a meaningful introduction to the arts and local heritage, while also sparking nostalgia and engagement among older family members, many of whom recognised familiar buildings depicted in the set designs.

Our summer 'Film in a Week' programme empowered our Signal Starters group (ages 8-11) to produce a short film titled 'Above the Below', drawing creative inspiration from Niki Colclough's 'Field Notes' exhibition. The prominent 'Leading Lights' sculptures from the exhibition were reimagined in the children's storytelling, forming a backdrop to a narrative about a rebellious fish exploring forbidden territory.

In response to Casey Orr's portrait exhibition 'Saturday Town' at Barrow's train station, we facilitated a series of five workshops for a group of six participants aged 16 years and over. Led by Casey Orr, the young people explored collage as a medium, creating large scale works using enlarged photographic prints and wheat paste techniques. The resulting pieces were showcased in a weekend pop-up exhibition at Cooke's Studios, highlighting the creativity and vision of the group.

"I enjoyed the art and mixing with others similar to me and the amazing staff." Youth Participant

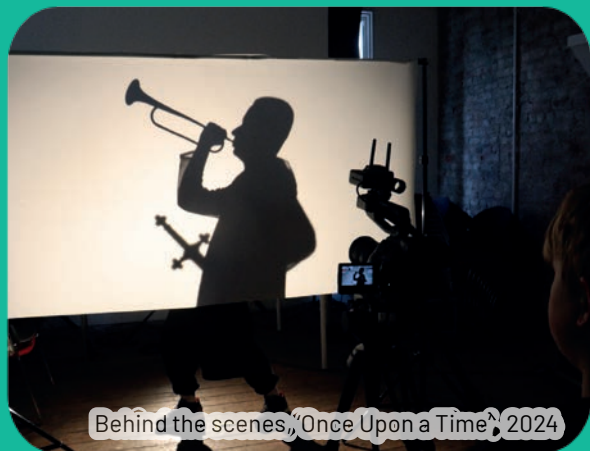
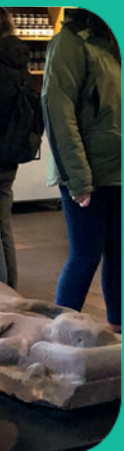
"I enjoyed getting a chance to be creative." Youth Participant

"I enjoyed doing art outside of heavily structured A levels." Youth Participant

"These sessions got me out of my room which is better for my mental health." Youth Participant

"The workshops have reinspired my interest in art." Youth Participant





Behind the scenes, 'Once Upon a Time', 2024



BFI, HOME Screening, Feb 2025

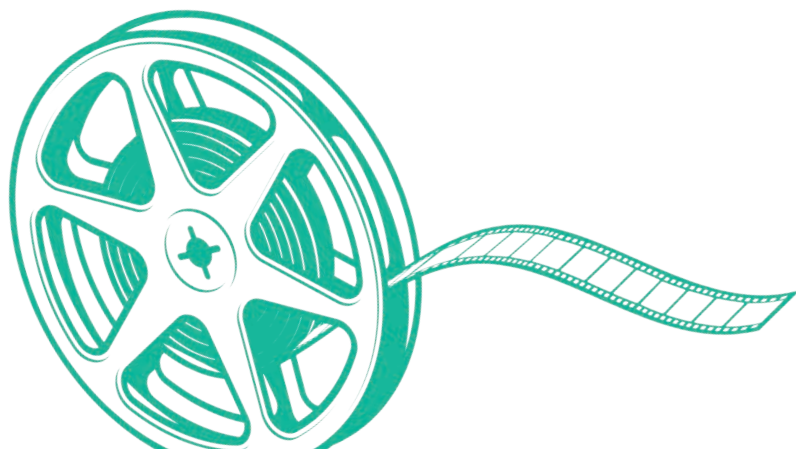


BFI, HOME Screening, Feb 2025



YOUTH FILM SCREENINGS

This year 228 participants, parents, families and the wider community attended in-person screenings of films made by our youth programme cohorts. 'Once Upon a Time' was a collaboration between Cooke's Crew (11-15 year olds) and Get Digital (16-19 year olds), made during the summer. It was screened alongside the BFI Academy cohort's film 'Millie and June' to a packed audience. Participants of the BFI Academy also visited HOME in Manchester for the screening of their film and those of the other North West Academies cohorts and received well deserved praise.



BFI, HOME Screening, Feb 2025

SIGNAL STARTERS

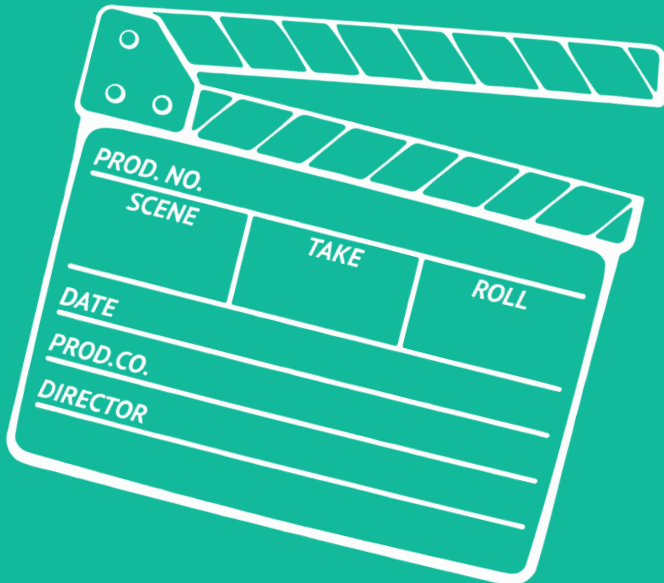
We are now in our 10th year of running our claymation, stop-frame animation sessions for 8-11 year olds, funded by Children in Need. These free, oversubscribed workshops run through each school holiday for local disadvantaged children and are focused on building their confidence, communication with others and encouraging them to make friends and connect with their peers. Participants collaboratively create their story, design their own characters, learn to make their model to a high standard through the support of experienced staff, voice record their characters and learn digital stop-motion animation techniques to make their short film from scratch. These free sessions saw over 100 young people doing tasters and 31 taster session participants progressing onto one of our four day 'Film in a Week' workshops during the year.

This year Spencer, our 20 year old Signal Starters alumni, successfully returned to Signal for a paid role as a mentor model-making with the young people.

20 young people worked on gaining the Arts Award Explore qualification during the 'Film in a Week' sessions.



arts
award



COOKE'S CREW / GET DIGITAL

Funded by Cumbria Community Foundation, our Cooke's Crew (12-15 year olds) and Get Digital (16-19 year olds) cohorts came together, for the second year running, to collaborate on a joint short film. Over 14 sessions during the summer holidays 13 young people (nine of which had progressed from Signal Starters) took part in Cooke's Crew and 19 took part in Get Digital. Six of the Get Digital participants were returning alumni who specifically worked with the younger cohort to mentor, direct and teach them how to use the equipment, resulting in a short film using a mix of live action and animation. Inspired by both groups' international diversity, the film was themed around medieval storytelling and used the cultural backgrounds of participants to influence the story and made use of a variety of languages (Spanish, Albanian, Filipino and Ukrainian).

29% of the YP were non White British. Eleven participants across both groups told us they had a disability or learning difference, with four participants speaking little or no English. Participants were encouraged to mix and engage with one another, with Google translate becoming an important tool during sessions and peer interviews. We were also lucky enough to have access to an interpreter, via the Multicultural Forum, who was able to translate documents for us and the young people.



Cooke's Crew/Get Digital, Aug 2024



Get Digital, Aug 2024

"Before the course he was really unhappy at school and this course had helped to boost his confidence by giving him a new hobby that he now enjoys. He also liked attending a place where he has felt welcome by the staff and other young people. It has been life changing to see him happy again." Cooke's Crew Participants Parent

"My son is very interested in becoming a film director and everything he learned in the course has been fantastic for him, as well as helping him interact with other young people his age, since we arrived from Colombia a few months ago and my son, who is autistic, does not know English yet, but Cook's Crew made his participation easy!! I am immediately grateful for the wonderful work! Thank you!" Cooke's Crew Participants Parent

"Ever since he started the course he kept practicing animation at home and when we went on holiday to stay with friends he encouraged other children to carry out filmmaking. He keeps talking all about Signal Films and asking when he can come back again." Cooke's Crew Participants Parent

"It has improved my abilities to work as a team and inspired me to enter the film industry" Get Digital Participant

"I moved to Barrow a month before this started and i didn't know anyone and now I have friends" Get Digital Participant

BRITISH FILM INDUSTRY ACADEMY



This year marks an exciting development as we became part of the North West Film Academies Consortium, working in partnership with HOME (Manchester), FACT (Liverpool), Aunty Social (Blackpool) and Touchstones (Rochdale). Now in its 13th year, our Film Academy benefited greatly from this collaborative network, providing participants with a wider sense of community and the opportunity to connect with peers from across the region.

Over the course of five months, our group of 16-19 year olds trained with professional mentors to produce their own short film, 'Millie and June', while also completing the Silver Arts Award. Each participant had the chance to specialise in a specific crew role, gaining hands-on experience in both technical and creative aspects of filmmaking. With access to industry standard equipment and guided on set learning, the programme offered a rare and immersive professional training experience.

We are especially proud to see our alumni returning to give back. This year, Adam Pickford - Producer and Cinematographer of the Channel 4 feature film 'The Fence' - delivered a masterclass and provided in-person mentorship as Director of Photography during our two-day shoot.

The finished film premiered at HOME in Manchester alongside the work of other consortium partners, giving our young people the unforgettable experience of seeing their film on the big screen before an audience of 190. A second more intimate screening was held at Cooke's Studios for friends and family, with a full house audience of 63.

"Amazing to see how young people can progress onto creating really professional films." Parent

"Very good captivating storyline, really good film in quality, believable set, good acting and timing." Parent

"Really good. A challenging film and I didn't expect the finale. Brilliant, acting and script. Excellent film." Parent

We will now submit 'Millie and June' to various festivals which the cohort have already researched.



IMPACT GOAL 2: SKILLED, FULFILLED CREATIVES

A key part of our mission is to break down barriers to creative careers for people living in isolated and underrepresented areas of Barrow and Cumbria. We support people in building sustainable futures in the creative sector by helping them grow in confidence, develop their skills, and become more adaptable to the evolving nature of creative work.

Through a variety of opportunities - such as workshops, events and collaborative projects - we create chances for individuals to connect with others who share similar interests to help support each other on their creative journeys. Our goal is to encourage both personal growth and the development of meaningful collaborative work.

"You helped me learn at a pace I could do. Everybody was so friendly and it was just everything you would want for a neurodiverse adult to come into and go 'We just accept you no matter how weird or wonderful you are. Come in, take a seat, take some pictures'. And then to connect that along with the Sankey Archive, with these pictures of where I live but from a completely different age, it was a dream come true for me. It really was." Regular Volunteer/Participant



FIELD NOTES

As part of our 'Sankey: Lives through the Lens' programme in summer 2024, we commissioned artist Nicky Colclough and engaged a cohort of nine local young people, recruited through partners such as Vision Support and Children's Services, to co-create 'Field Notes.' Inspired by the Sankey Archive, a series of seven creative workshops introduced participants to photography, 3D scanning, digital collage and sound recording. Field trips to archive-related locations encouraged independent exploration and artistic response.

Of the 9 participants:

86% said they gained skills in teamwork

63% said they gained communication skills

86% said they gained skills in using creativity

86% said they developed skills as a result of the project

The resulting work was exhibited in our gallery throughout August 2024, launched with a special opening event and welcoming a total of 245 visitors, with 100% agreeing that the exhibition had a positive impact on their lives. 92% agreed it was important to have these types of activities in Barrow and 88% agreed that anyone can take part in these activities. Wrap around activities for the exhibition included a Family Day which welcomed 47 young people and adults through our doors, workshops with Mind, Furness Multicultural Forum and a Sankey-themed animation set for our participation in Barrowful's 'Playcation' festival around multiple locations in Barrow, including Barrow Park.

"A fantastic exhibition. Beautiful, poignant images and such clarity. A plea to have a longer exhibition to allow further folk to enjoy a joyful oracle of Barrow." Audience member

"Mesmerising. Truly unique insight into a lost world." Audience member

"We really did have quite a few young people express their amazement at the collection, so the Sankey work reaches across the generations and unites all ages in a common understanding of the town's history and provides a sense of belonging." Volunteer & Sankey Researcher)



"It's been interesting learning new techniques like soundscape, 3D scanning, and beachcombing sculptures. Looking forward to the outcome." Participant

MIND AND FURNESS MULTICULTURAL FORUM WORKSHOPS

Our partnership with Furness Multicultural Forum and Mind in Furness has continued to thrive with the 'Sankey: Lives through the Lens' project serving as a powerful example of community engagement.

During the summer, we hosted a series of weekly workshops that alternated between mixed media and textiles led by Danielle Chappell Aspinwell, and photography delivered by local photographer Phil Green. The photography sessions, supported by Signal Staff and Volunteers, provided a welcoming environment where participants could learn to use digital cameras, explore photographic techniques and receive one-on-one guidance. Each week focussed on a different theme with practical exercises to build skills and confidence. The workshops also included cyanotype printing allowing participants to create unique portraits of each other.

A curated selection of the photographs, along with the mixed media artwork was exhibited at the 'Field Notes' exhibition in August 2024, which provided a meaningful opportunity for participants to see their creative achievements celebrated in a public place.

"This sort of thing never happens to people like me!" Mind participant at exhibition

"I have loved it. I have learnt lots of new stuff and made new friends." Mind Participant

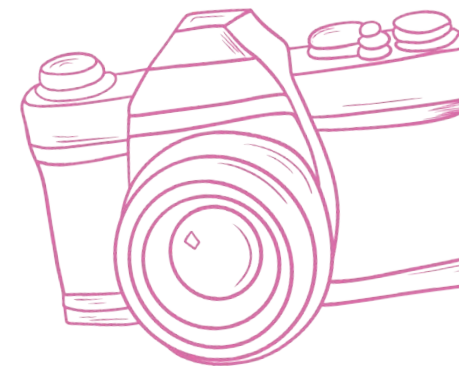
"I want to do more please." Mind participant

PROJECT ASSISTANT WORK PLACEMENT

This year we offered three paid work placements to young people from a variety of backgrounds and life stages. One participant joined us ahead of starting university, gaining valuable first job experience, while another had recently graduated. A third had been out of work for a period of time and was eager to begin building a career in the creative industry.

These placements provided hands-on experience across several areas of our organisation. The participants supported our workshops, contributed to social media and marketing initiatives, represented us at Freshers Fairs and brought fresh creativity to the redesign of our youth group mascots.

"My experience with Signal Film and Media has been enjoyable and educational. I find that new opportunities have arisen just by being there. The team at Signal have been very inclusive, despite me being new to working with them, it's been a positive experience all around" Project Assistant



ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND NPO PROGRAMME

SATURDAY TOWN

Saturday Town is an award-winning, nationally significant photographic project celebrating youth culture, fashion and self-expression led by Casey Orr, who we brought to work with Signal photographing participants in a colourful pop up studio at 'Barrowween' and Pride.

The playful and vibrant portraits produced and accompanying publication celebrated the region and its people whilst highlighting the subject's individual style and personality.

Saturday Town was launched at Barrow Train Station and Cooke's Studios on the 19th September 2024 and a pop up exhibition of youth and artist co-creative works exhibited on the 18th- 20th October 2024.



A GUIDE TO GENTLE PROTEST

A Guide to Gentle Protest began with a three-part workshop series led by Artists Joseph Doubtfire and Tina Dempsey, inviting participants to explore and creatively express their cares and concerns about Barrow-in-Furness. Through guided town-centre and coastal walks, participants collected images, objects and ideas that captured their connection to the town's industrial and natural landscapes. Participants worked towards creating 'gentle' visual manifestos – public declarations of policies, cares and aims that communicated their ideas through artworks and creative writing.

The group's work was captured in a film created by the artists and they used the manifestos to create new artwork that was installed in the underpass at Barrow Train Station.

"I've enjoyed getting my camera out and intend to take more photographs & learn more about my local area." Participant

"I am able to transfer what I know to help in the job I do." Participant

"Gave me ideas for new creative projects and I was able to network with other local creatives and facilitators." Participant

Watch the film:
www.signalfilmmedia.com/a-guide-to-gentle-protest/



EMERGING CUMBRIAN ARTIST DEVELOPMENT LAB

In September 2024, 10 out of 14 of our Lab Artists came together for a collaborative, jam-packed day which began with a trip to Piel Island where Amy Dickson and Jamie Jenkinson from Jwllrs (a free alternative art school based in Morecambe) ran an outdoor workshop on practices of exploration and quantum thinking.

After lunch we made our way to Furness Abbey where artist Joseph Doubtfire led a creative VR workshop, introducing many artists to the possibilities of making digital art using VR headsets. The day concluded with group discussions and networking. The opportunity to reconnect as a cohort and for artists to exchange progress on where they were with their art practice was energising and inspirational, with 100% of artists reporting that the Lab helped them make new connections, access new networks and feel more involved in the arts and its communities and 86% reporting they learned about new techniques, tools or technologies.

We have also held group sessions on zoom where mentees presented their work in progress and have had individual consultations in person and online in preparation for their exhibition in late 2025. We have provided technical, funding advice and field research for mentees, as well as letters of support for three mentees which aided in the award of two 'Developing Your Own Creative' (DYCP) funds and one project grant.

"With the Digital Development Lab being a continuous source of reconnection, I feel like my communications have developed since the start of the project. Looking back I feel confident in seeing this journey and how it has gradually allowed me to come out of my shell. I have learned specific digital skills on the Lab such as how to use and paint in VR, but through conversations with other artists on the Lab I have learned about different approaches to using such digital skills and making work. I have learned more about and experienced in more depth, Furness Abbey and Piel Island which has made me appreciate the heritage of Barrow on a deeper level." Participant

"Participating in the Lab re-inspires me to come up with brand new ideas and approaches to making which I wouldn't have thought about previously. After not having much time to create work as regularly as I would like to and struggling to give my practice the time it needs, the Lab gives me a boost and reminds me why I make art in the first place." Participant



Artist Lab Workshop, Piel Island, Sep 2024



Artist Lab VR Workshop, Furness Abbey, Sep 2024

MENTORING CREATIVES

Throughout the year we have remained deeply committed to providing consistent support, guidance and encouragement to the artists involved in our Development LAB, as well as to our commissioned and associate artists. This ongoing support has taken various forms ranging from assistance with research and offering practical and technical help, to facilitating the development of their individual artist practices and project outputs.

We have actively supported and championed their exhibitions and creative projects, which have taken place across a variety of locations including Kendal, Morecambe, Millom, Grizedale and Barrow. These engagements have allowed artists to connect with specific communities and share their work with wider audiences.

"I really appreciate your time and the many introductions you made for me!" Participant



Photography Workshop with Furness Multicultural Forum, Mar 2024



Artist Lab Workshop, Sep 2024

PSYCHOGEOLOGY – EXHIBITION

Psychogeology was exhibited in Barrow Market throughout the spring and summer of 2024, showcasing work created in February and March 2024 by local young participants and Manchester based artist, Jack Brown.

Through exploring underwater filming, using blue screens, making sculptures, collecting rock samples on field trips, digging holes on the beach and learning first-hand from a professional artist, participants collaboratively created three new artworks to share with the community.

The exhibition took over an unused stall in Barrow's town centre market and the digital artworks could also be viewed externally at night time while the market was closed. You may have also seen the large mural on the side of our own Cooke's Studios highlighting the personified image of Barrow's local geology and advertising the exhibition. The exhibition attracted 2,280 visitors.

"Really interesting development of an idea." Visitor Feedback

"Great, really great, it's very cool and better than other stuff in town." Visitor Feedback



"I've been working with a group of brilliant creative residents to find ways to explore and respond to Barrow's geology and deep history. As the project progressed we broke into three teams each with their own focus. The 'Hills team' were interested in the Slag Hills in Ormsgill, the 'Sea team' wanted to throw cameras into the ocean and the 'Quarry team' wanted to make a film of them disappearing back into the Quarry or maybe into geology itself." Jack Brown



ENERGY GOAST

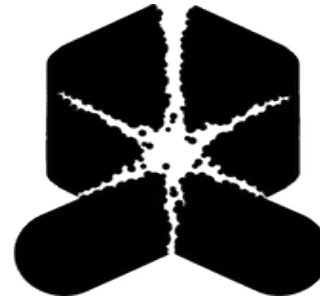
As part of our continued and evolving partnership with artists Vaseem Bhatti and Mishka Henner, we are proud to have commissioned a digital work that will contribute to the latest chapter of the Energy Goast Project. This initiative takes the form of a conceptual 'nature awareness brand' that draws inspiration from, and is deeply rooted in, the strikingly beautiful and geologically volcanic landscapes of Cumbria. Originally conceived during 'West Coast Photo' - Signal's celebrated International Photography Festival held in 2021 - this new development marks an exciting extension of the project's creative and environmental narrative.

"This is a new vision for Cumbria, one that attracts the world's brightest minds, investors, and adventurers—ensuring that economic growth, environmental responsibility, and engineering brilliance go hand in hand."

This is not just about preservation. It's about reinvention. Energy Goast is the future. And the future starts now."
www.energygoast.com



The next phase of this commission - rolling out in June 2025 - is a targeted PR campaign (with a bespoke designed press pack) teasing the enigmatic possibilities of Energy Goast. This will also be accompanied with a series of podcasts digging into 'key aspects' of the project.



ENERGY GOAST



CEO WINS TOP ACCOLADE



THE LAKE DISTRICT RESURFACED

STORE



CARGOCARRIER™



CHILLSTORE™



ENVIROCLOAK™ 2.0

IMPACT GOAL 3: CONNECTED, CULTURAL COMMUNITY

Barrow faces a significant gap in access to contemporary art and meaningful cultural experiences. In response, we've worked to bridge this divide by delivering engaging digital arts programmes that are open, inclusive, and community led, as well as undergoing a £1.4 million Capital Works Project.

This year we are nearing completion of the transformation of our historic Grade II listed Victorian warehouses into a dynamic, public facing arts and cultural centre. This flagship capital project to improve infrastructure and facilities marks a change in accessibility and visibility in Barrow, providing world class creative opportunities for communities that have traditionally been underserved.

A diverse range of partners - including Furness Multicultural Forum, Theatre Factory and Sir John Fisher Foundation - will benefit immediately from the new space with at least ten other organisations expected to regularly use the venue each year.

Emerging and local artists will soon have the opportunity to exhibit their work in a purpose built, international standard gallery space they can take pride in. Visitors will enjoy year round access to exhibitions in a professionally curated setting, supported by a welcoming team, and an onsite cafe in the future.

The upgraded infrastructure, which includes new lighting track systems and environmental controls, will enable us to meet the exacting standards required to host national and international touring exhibitions. We are already delivering on this potential with an exciting opening programme, including a partnership with Martin Parr Foundation, and exhibitions featuring Chris Killip and their touring exhibition; 'ONE YEAR: Photographs from the Minors' Strike 1984-85, alongside community works.



Photography Workshop with Furness Multicultural Forum, Mar 2024



BFI standing in front of hoardings marking start of our refurb!

SANKEY - LIVES THROUGH THE LENS

Over the past 12 months we have worked closely with community members to explore the 'Sankey Photographic Archive', uncovering historical connections and thematic links across the collection. Participants engaged with both urban and rural narratives, drawing inspiration from the Sankey family's legacy to produce a wide range of creative responses, including photography, printmaking, cyanotypes, collage, sculpture, writing and sound. Overall, an amazing 15,450 people have been part of this project so far, including audiences, participants, and volunteers combined, over 111 total sessions.

This programme has fostered new friendships, skill development, and a deeper connection to local and global histories. The archive continues to inspire, offering diverse perspectives and stories that remain relevant today. We have particularly valued seeing the collection through the eyes of our commissioned artists and participants of their workshops.

Volunteers have been instrumental in the project's success, delivering public talks, curating events, producing podcasts, and mentoring fellow volunteers and participants. Their contributions have enriched the programme and supported the development of both artists and community members.

As we move into the final phase of the project, we are pleased to collaborate with artists Nicholas J.R White, Dawn Parsonage, Jack Brown, Tina Dempsey and Nom Ncube. Together we will explore connections between Barrow, Blackpool and Africa through co-curated artworks and collaborative research.

"I think the sessions are very good and have made me grow in skills and confidence. Also helped me feel relaxed." Volunteer



ADULT STEERING GROUP

We have been continuing our community steering group with adult representatives of all ages and backgrounds through 2024-2025. The group includes young creatives, artists, local cultural supporters and heritage professionals.

Meetings were held in May, October & January and participants were able to join in person or online. They have helped: plan for our capital project, workshopped Sankey project plans, fed into artist commissions, analysed risks to engagement and their help has been particularly useful as we move into formalising our youth and adult community engagement.

Individuals from the group have also been part of our artist selection processes and have helped us throughout the year providing objective and enthusiastic advice and support.



VOLUNTEERING

Our committed team of volunteers has continued to play an integral role in supporting the 'Sankey Photography Archive' and our arts programme. Their contributions span welcoming visitors, delivering talks, assisting with workshops and acting as dedicated ambassadors for the organisation.

Highlights from this year include a group visit to the Liverpool Maritime Museum, featuring an informative tour of the 17th century dock system. We also continued our festive tradition with the annual Sankey Christmas Quiz. Additionally volunteers have been instrumental in the development of a new newspaper and podcast, aimed at expanding the reach and impact of the Sankey Archive to broader audiences.

"My experience of volunteering at Signal has been a positive one, it has presented opportunities and challenges which I would not normally have encountered and it has certainly taken me out of my comfort zone at times. I have enjoyed the experience and hope my contributions have been useful." (Volunteer)



"I enjoy volunteering with Signal media for several reasons: It connects me to my personal history in the Barrow area, I have learnt new things linked to photography and Sankey archive, there are opportunities to contribute and engage with projects, the staff and environment are supportive and flexible, and I like that outcomes are displayed in an exhibition and on line so others can enjoy and share."

Volunteer

EMPLOYEES & STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Our ability to achieve and uphold high standards in our creative work relies on the talent and dedication of our team. We are therefore committed to providing staff with as much relevant Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as possible, in order to continually enhance their knowledge, skills and professional competence.

This year we attended training in:

- **Mental Health First Aid**
- **Digital Marketing**
- **Fundraising**
- **Brave Futures Strategy**
- **Trauma Informed Basic Awareness Training**
- **Disability Confident Intro**
- **Dedicated Safeguarding Lead training**
- **Audience Data Collection**
- **Website Health Check**
- **Archive Network**
- **NFTS & BBC Introduction to The Role of Production Coordinator Taster Day**

All of our staff undertake Safeguarding training for working with children and have Enhanced DBS checks which are renewed every three years.



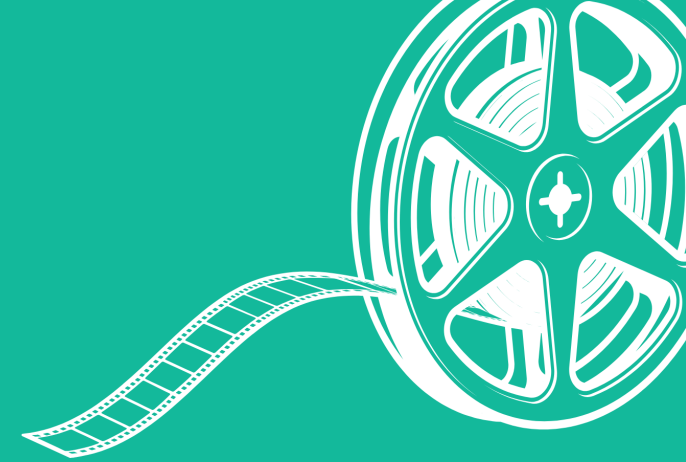
ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

As part of our commitment to addressing the climate emergency, environmental sustainability remains within the core of all we do. It is embedded as a Development Priority within our Arts Council NPO Programme and underpins our Strategic Plan 2022-2030.

We considered the impact on the environment throughout our arts programme, Landscape & Protest but especially as part of our 'A Guide to Gentle Protest' workshops. These workshops, including our workshops for 'Psychogeology' / Get Digital and 'Field Notes' were largely held in areas of natural beauty with themes naturally emerging around conservation, protection and sustaining our local environments while highlighting ecological awareness through artistic practice.

To better understand and reduce our environmental impact, we actively use Julie's Bicycle, an online tool to monitor our carbon footprint. We prioritise sustainable materials in production, work with local and environmentally responsible suppliers across all our operations. Environmental Policy is a key topic during our monthly team meetings to inform ongoing best practice.

Our approach reflects a long term commitment to sustainability, ensuring that environmental consideration are not only addressed but actively shape our organisational culture and creative outputs.



FINANCIAL REVIEW

The results for the year are summarised in the Statement of Financial Activities (income and expenditure account) on page 22. Incoming resources increased by £823,908 (118%) to £1,524,679. Income in respect of restricted funds increased by £875,555 (337%) to £1,135,725; income in respect of unrestricted income decreased by £51,647 (12%) to £388,954.

Expenditure totalled £565,668, an increase of £33,711 (6%). This led to an increase in the total fund balances of £959,011 in the year. They now total £1,338,935; of which the General Fund (unrestricted) totals £236,151, including £72,640 designated funds. The restricted funds total £1,102,784 of which £990,000 relates to capital grants in respect of the improvements to the leasehold property.

Reserves policy

The trustees recognise the importance of maintaining a realistic level of reserves in order to ensure that Signal Film and Media continues to be in a position to discharge its obligations to its beneficiaries, partners, creditors and staff. The reserves policy is reviewed annually by trustees to take into account risk and sustainability of the organisation.

At 31 March 2021 the trustees redefined the reserves target such that unrestricted general funds, excluding designated funds, are required to be at least equal to 3 months' cover of core costs (being establishment and staff expenditure not directly attributable to project activity) to be held in the form of cash at bank in a specially designated bank deposit account.

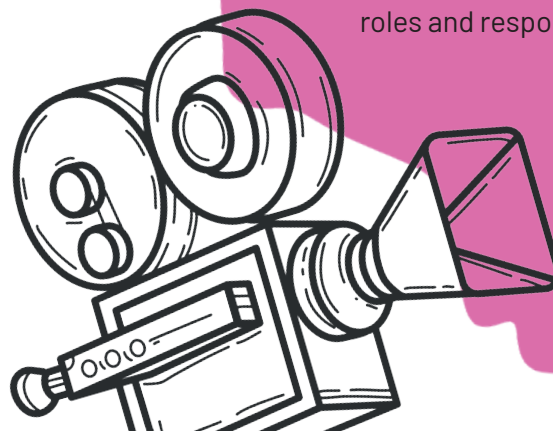
The trustees have considered the major risks to which the charity is exposed and have implemented review systems to mitigate these risks.

The major risks are currently identified as:

- Reliance on short term charitable grants income to supplement earned income to meet the cost of the creative programme;
- Changes in the arts funding system; and
- Critical impact of the loss of key senior staff.

To mitigate these risks the charity:

- Ensures that it has a diverse funding profile without an over-reliance on any one source of funding;
- Reviews existing and potential ways of generating earned income and works towards financial sustainability;
- Maintains and enhances relationships with key funders and remains well informed about developments in the arts funding arena;
- Invests time and effort in the exploration of funding opportunities and financial partnerships; and
- Ensures that all staff, including key senior staff, are well supported and that there is a regular appraisal of skills, roles and responsibilities within the senior staff team.



STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The charity is a company limited by guarantee, not having share capital, and is governed by Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 10 April 2013, as amended. It's company registered number is 6606718. On 14 May 2013 the company became a registered charity with a charity number 1152012.

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

Ms K J Kolbe	Ms H Wall
Ms L A R Slater - Chair	Ms N Wealleans-Turner
Ms K M Bird	Ms J L Swales
Mr C J Barnes	Mr D J Foster
Ms B Burkeman	Ms M A M Davis

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The Board consists of people with considerable interest and experience in the arts, who are able to draw on their past experiences at a senior level in relevant disciplines.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

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

The company's current policy concerning the payment of trade creditors is to:

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

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



Casey Orr, Barrow Pride, May 2024

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

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

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

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

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

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

Auditor

In accordance with the company's articles, a resolution proposing that Melville & Co be reappointed as auditor of the company will be put at a General Meeting.

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



Ms K J Kolbe
Trustee

Date: 30/01/2026



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF SIGNAL FILM & MEDIA LIMITED

Opinion

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

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF SIGNAL FILM & MEDIA LIMITED

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the trustees' report; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities, the trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose of company law, are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect there under.

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

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.⁵ The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

[Which laws and regulations the auditor identified as being of significance in the context of the entity.] ICAEW guidance relating to reporting on irregularities, November 2020, based on ISA 700 A39-1 to A39-5



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF SIGNAL FILM & MEDIA LIMITED

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

We identified areas of laws and regulations that could reasonably be expected to have a material effect on the financial statements from our general commercial and sector experience, through discussion with the trustees and other management, and from inspection of the charity's records. We discussed with the trustees and other management the policies and procedures regarding compliance with laws and regulations and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance during the audit.

The charity is subject to laws and regulations that directly affect the financial statements including financial reporting legislation (including related charities legislation), pensions legislation, taxation legislation and further laws and regulations that could indirectly affect the financial statements, comprising environmental, health and safety and employment legislation and safeguarding. We assessed the extent of compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our procedures on the related financial statement items. Auditing standards limit the required audit procedures to identify non-compliance with these laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any. These procedures did not identify any potentially material actual or suspected non-compliance.

To identify risks of material misstatement due to fraud we considered the opportunities and incentives and pressures that may exist within the charity to commit fraud. Our risk assessment procedures included: enquiry of trustees and other management to understand the high level policies and procedures in place to prevent and detect fraud, reading Board minutes and considering performance targets and incentive schemes in place for management. We remained alert to any indications

of fraud during the audit.

As a result of these procedures we identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas:

- income recognition and in particular the risk that income is recognised in the wrong reporting period or that restricted income is incorrectly recognised as unrestricted income.

These risks may arise due to a potential desire to present weaker results due to an incentive to obtain further funding.

As required by auditing standards we also identified and addressed the risk of management override of controls.

We performed the following procedures to address the risks of fraud identified:

- identifying and testing high risk journal entries through vouching the entries to supporting documentation; and
- testing the recognition of income and in particular that it was appropriately recognised or deferred.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF SIGNAL FILM & MEDIA LIMITED

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

S Oram

S Oram (Jan 30, 2026 15:26:49 GMT)

Simon Oram MA FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of Melville & Co, Statutory Auditor

Chartered Accountants

Unit 17-18, Trinity Enterprise Centre

Furness Business Park

Ironworks Road

Barrow-in-Furness

LA14 2PN

Date: ..30/01/2026.....

Melville & Co is eligible for appointment as auditor of the charity by virtue of its eligibility for appointment as auditor of a company under section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds as restated	Total
	Notes	2025 £	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £	2024 £
Income from:							
Charitable activities	3	384,303	1,135,725	1,520,028	438,503	260,170	698,673
Investments	4	4,651	-	4,651	2,098	-	2,098
Total income		<u>388,954</u>	<u>1,135,725</u>	<u>1,524,679</u>	<u>440,601</u>	<u>260,170</u>	<u>700,771</u>
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	5	302,043	263,625	565,668	341,939	190,018	531,957
Total expenditure		<u>302,043</u>	<u>263,625</u>	<u>565,668</u>	<u>341,939</u>	<u>190,018</u>	<u>531,957</u>
Net income		<u>86,911</u>	<u>872,100</u>	<u>959,011</u>	<u>98,662</u>	<u>70,152</u>	<u>168,814</u>
Transfers between funds		(7,529)	7,529	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds	7	<u>79,382</u>	<u>879,629</u>	<u>959,011</u>	<u>98,662</u>	<u>70,152</u>	<u>168,814</u>
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances at 1 April 2024		156,769	223,155	379,924	58,107	153,003	211,110
Fund balances at 31 March 2025		<u>236,151</u>	<u>1,102,784</u>	<u>1,338,935</u>	<u>156,769</u>	<u>223,155</u>	<u>379,924</u>



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

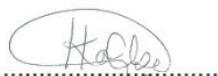
BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

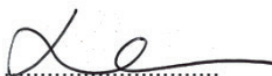
		2025		2024 as restated	
	Notes	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	11		923,889		124,715
Current assets					
Debtors	12	357,854		117,928	
Cash at bank and in hand		251,862		215,207	
		609,716		333,135	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(194,670)		(77,926)	
Net current assets			415,046		255,209
Total assets less current liabilities			1,338,935		379,924
Income funds					
Restricted funds	15		1,102,784		223,155
<u>Unrestricted funds</u>					
Designated funds	17	72,640		110,427	
General unrestricted funds		163,511		46,342	
			236,151		156,769
			1,338,935		379,924

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

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 30/01/2026



Ms K J Kolbe
Trustee



Ms L A R Slater - Chair
Trustee

Company Registration No. 06606718

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements under the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from operations	19		832,778		130,856
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(856,503)		(120,785)	
Prior year adjustment for purchase of fixed assets		55,729		-	
Investment income received		4,651		2,098	
Net cash used in investing activities			(796,123)		(118,687)
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents			36,655		12,169
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			215,207		203,038
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			251,862		215,207

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Signal Film & Media Limited is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is Cooke's Studios, 104 Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness, LA14 5QR.

1.1 Accounting convention

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

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

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, [modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value]. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

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

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

1.4 Income

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

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

1.5 Expenditure

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

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

All expenditure is accounted for when incurred. Charitable expenditure includes the costs of all activities carried out, with the exception of the costs incurred for governance purposes.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

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

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

Improvements to leasehold property
(straightline over the term of the lease)

Plant and equipment	20% straight line
Fixtures and fittings	20% straight line
Computers	33% straight line

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

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

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

estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

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

1.9 Financial instruments

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

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

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

Basic financial assets

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

Basic financial liabilities

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

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

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

Derecognition of financial liabilities

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

1.10 Employee benefits

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

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

1.11 Retirement benefits

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

2 Prior period restatement

The prior period adjustment relates to the capital grant received from Arts Council England. This was not treated as a restricted grant in 2024 (though it was in 2023). The expenditure relating to it was not capitalised in 2023 and only partly in 2024. As a result the following changes have been made to the comparative figures:

Restricted fund	Original £	Restatement £	2024 £
	45,122	107,881	153,003
- opening balance	216,001	44,169	260,170
- income	(190,018)	-	(190,018)
- expenditure			
	71,105	152,050	223,155
- closing balance			
Unrestricted fund	Original £	Restatement £	2024 £
	140,843	(82,736)	58,107
- opening balance	484,770	(44,169)	440,601
- income	(372,523)	30,584	(341,939)
- expenditure			
	253,090	(96,321)	156,769
- closing balance			
	324,195	55,729	379,924
Total			

There has been a corresponding increase of £55,729 in the Improvements to leasehold property.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

3 Charitable activities

	Charitable Income 2025 £	Charitable Income 2024 £
Grants	1,450,834	649,569
Other income	69,194	49,104
	<u>1,520,028</u>	<u>698,673</u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	384,303	438,503
Restricted funds	1,135,725	260,170
	<u>1,520,028</u>	<u>698,673</u>
Grants		
Arts Council England - NPO funding	200,000	200,000
Westmorland & Furness Council - NPO funding	22,500	-
Other unrestricted funds	-	73,973
Restricted funds - see note 15	1,135,725	265,169
Designated funds - see note 17	92,609	110,427
	<u>1,450,834</u>	<u>649,569</u>

4 Income from investments

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Interest receivable	<u>4,651</u>	<u>2,098</u>

5 Charitable activities

	Charitable xpenditure 2025 £	Charitable Expenditure 2024 £
Staff costs	212,587	158,349
Equipment	36,184	8,275
Insurance	1,361	1,514
Light and heat	18,443	28,472
Repairs and renewals	4,715	3,404
Travelling	28,180	16,047
Computer costs	33,068	24,977
Sundry expenses	13,709	21,880
Legal and professional	2,562	3,623
Freelance staff	178,023	221,500
Advertising	7,780	14,953
Bank charges	101	55
Training	13,224	9,791
Rent and rates	7,706	7,833
	<u>557,643</u>	<u>520,673</u>
Share of support costs (see note 6)	1,600	6,522
Share of governance costs (see note 6)	6,425	4,762
	<u>565,668</u>	<u>531,957</u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	302,043	341,939
Restricted funds	263,625	190,018
	<u>565,668</u>	<u>531,957</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

6 Support costs allocated to activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Depreciation	1,600	6,522
Governance costs	6,425	4,762
	<u>8,025</u>	<u>11,284</u>
Analysed between:		
Unrestricted funds	<u>8,025</u>	<u>11,284</u>

7 Net movement in funds

	2025 £	2024 £
The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Fees payable to the charity's auditor:		
- for the audit of the charity's financial statements	2,742	804
- for other assurance services	594	804
- for tax advisory services	150	144
- for other financial services	2,939	3,010
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	<u>1,600</u>	<u>6,522</u>

8 Trustees

The trustees received the following fees from the charity during the year:

Ms K J Kolbe - £61,900 (2024 - £54,500)

Ms L A R Slater - £60,620 (2024 - £53,750)

Ms K Bird - £26,155 (2024 - £14,475)

The fees include £28,484 for extra work to secure additional £900,000 funds to meet capital project deficit and to project manage, administer and deliver the £1.4m capital project in addition to the programme delivery.

9 Employees

	2025 Number	2024 Number
The average monthly number of employees during the year was:	<u>9</u>	<u>6</u>
Employment costs	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	196,656	146,955
Social security costs	11,630	8,062
Other pension costs	4,301	3,332
	<u>212,587</u>	<u>158,349</u>

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

10 Taxation

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

11 Tangible fixed assets

	Improvements to leasehold property	Plant and equipment	Fixtures and fittings	Computers	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Cost					
At 1 April 2024	65,056	87,905	47,440	25,564	225,965
Additions	856,370	-	-	133	856,503
At 31 March 2025	921,426	87,905	47,440	25,697	1,082,468
Depreciation and impairment					
At 1 April 2024	-	83,975	47,440	25,564	156,979
Depreciation charged in the year	-	1,555	-	45	1,600
At 31 March 2025	-	85,530	47,440	25,609	158,579
Carrying amount					
At 31 March 2025	921,426	2,375	-	88	923,889
At 31 March 2024	120,785	3,930	-	-	124,715

12 Debtors

	2025	2024
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	5,218	22,198
Other debtors	94,166	5,481
Prepayments and accrued income	258,470	90,249
	357,854	117,928

13 Creditors: amounts falling due

	2025	2024
	£	£
Other taxation and social security	2,715	256
Trade creditors	133,025	23,413
Accruals and deferred income	58,930	54,257
	194,670	77,926

14 Retirement benefit schemes

	2025	2024
	£	£
Defined contribution schemes		
Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes	4,301	3,332

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

15 Restricted funds

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

	Balance at 1 April 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£	£
Sir John Fisher Foundation	-	20,000	(20,000)	7,529	7,529
Arts Council England Capital Fund	152,050	337,950	-	-	490,000
National Heritage Lottery Fund	-	135,454	(135,454)	-	-
Children in Need	7,721	19,222	(9,583)	-	17,360
Association of Independent Museums	43,384	17,000	(60,384)	-	-
Cumbria Community Foundation	-	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
Cumbria County Council (Library)	20,000	5,000	(5,000)	-	20,000
Police and Crime Commissioner	-	2,500	(2,500)	-	-
Community Fund	-	4,975	-	-	4,975
Barrow Town Council	-	19,669	(9,669)	-	10,000
National Lottery Community Fund	-	17,220	(14,500)	-	2,720
BFI Film Academy	-	1,535	(1,535)	-	-
Westmorland & Furness - Community Fund	-	500,000	-	-	500,000
Community Ownership Fund	-	50,200	-	-	50,200
Westmorland & Furness - Team Barrow	-	-	-	-	-
	223,155	1,135,725	(263,625)	7,529	1,102,784

The restricted fund balances include £990,000 of capital grants relating to the improvements to leasehold property, which came in to use in the summer of 2025 & will be depreciated over the remaining term of the lease (15 years) from then on.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

16 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2025 are represented by:			
Tangible assets	90,463	833,426	923,889
Current assets/(liabilities)	145,688	269,358	415,046
	<u>236,151</u>	<u>1,102,784</u>	<u>1,338,935</u>
	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by:			
Tangible assets	59,659	65,056	124,715
Current assets/(liabilities)	97,110	158,099	255,209
	<u>156,769</u>	<u>223,155</u>	<u>379,924</u>

17 Designated funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

	Balance at 1 April 2024 £	Movement in funds			Balance at 31 March 2025 £
	£	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	£
Tudor Trust	40,000	40,000	(40,001)	-	39,999
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation plus	8,500	-	(8,477)	-	23
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	24,398	-	(24,389)	-	9
Westmorland and Furness Council	-	10,000	(10,000)	-	-
Francis C Scott Charitable Trust	10,000	42,609	(40,000)	-	12,609
Sir John Fisher Foundation	7,529	-	-	(7,529)	-
Other designated funds	20,000	-	-	-	20,000
	<u>110,427</u>	<u>92,609</u>	<u>(122,867)</u>	<u>(7,529)</u>	<u>72,640</u>

The grant received the previous year's accounts as from the Sir John Fisher Foundation was specified, to the charity by the funder, after the completion of last year's accounts, as a restricted fund. Accordingly the balance brought forward in to this year's accounts has been transferred to the restricted funds.

18 Related party transactions

Creative Studios Cumbria Limited is a charitable company, under the control of trustees of Signal Film & Media Limited. During the year the paid rent, utilities and building running costs of £15,150 (2024 - £43,337) to Creative Studios Cumbria Limited.

19 Cash generated from operations

	2025 £	2024 £
Surplus for the year	959,011	168,814
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(4,651)	(2,098)
Prior period adjustment to opening capital		25,145
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	1,600	6,522
Movements in working capital:		
(Increase) in debtors	(239,926)	(81,047)
Increase in creditors	116,744	13,520
Cash generated from operations	<u>832,778</u>	<u>130,856</u>

