

# THE PHOENIX PROJECT



Charity no. 1153748

[phoenixprojectipswich.com](http://phoenixprojectipswich.com)

## ANNUAL REPORT 2025



Supported through



**SUFFOLK**  
Community  
Foundation



# THE PHOENIX PROJECT 2025

The Phoenix Project trustees would like to welcome you to our annual report 2025.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have supported the Phoenix Project over the past year.

This year the Phoenix Project has welcomed many new members and we look forward to welcoming all members new and old in the coming year.

It has been a busy year for the Phoenix Project. Earlier in the year we had a memorial day for John King (Phoenix Project Co-Founder) with the installation of a beautiful bench. This has given everyone a peaceful place to gather their thoughts as well as a lasting legacy of John.

The True Thoughts project has been producing many beautiful pieces of creative work as well as radio content. The Phoenix Project has also taken over the Quakers greenhouse so that members can grow their own fruit and vegetables. Also new this year were Qigong classes that have been running on a Friday morning.

There are many more wonderful activities that the Phoenix Project has been involved in and we hope that you enjoy reading about them.

## Tracy Corbett - Chair of Trustees



*"Honesty. Community. Kindness. Friendship. Hope. Strength. Compassion. Peace. Loyalty. Tolerance. They're all good words that we believe in here at the Phoenix Project."*

**Robert**

*"Thanks to everyone for being there today. I really appreciate the efforts made to keep The Phoenix going. I'm just beginning to emerge from the usual winter depressive state. Thanks everyone, for being there for yourselves, and for me."*

**John**

*"The Phoenix Project is a very valuable part of the wider community and I feel proud to be involved with the group."*

**Robert**

*Tracy originally came along to the Phoenix Project's creative sessions because she wanted to learn new things and be part of a community...*

*"I have received great support from facilitator and peers which has really helped to combat isolation. I always feel included no matter what level of skill I have & definitely feel like a valued member of the community."*

**Tracy**



# A HEARTFELT TRIBUTE TO JOHN KING



A big Phoenix THANK YOU to Mandy who made the bench with so much love, patience and perfectionism.



*"You can sit on this bench & you can forget all your troubles. You can relax. You're under no pressure. No one judges you here and you feel completely at home. A home from home I'd say."*

Mandy inscribed the words below into the bench. The words were contributed by project members.

Robert (quoted above) said that these words represent all the values that we believe in here at the Phoenix Project!

A bench to celebrate and remember our beautiful friend

On a beautiful summers' day in July, we gathered to celebrate John and to officially unveil the beautiful bench dedicated to his memory. It was a lovely garden party - we decorated the bench and ourselves! We all wore Hawaiian garlands, bright colours and Hawaiian shirts (very much John's style). We blew bubbles, played music, shared stories of John and enjoyed a lovely lunch together.

Back in 2009 John was on a mission, to establish a meeting place where people could find friendship and support to help improve mental well-being. He was a compassionate man and a good friend to so many.

He was very proud of the Phoenix Project and how we have grown into the charity we are today. Thank you, John, for your love and commitment to the Phoenix Project. You made a positive difference to so many people struggling with their mental health.

Long may your legacy continue.

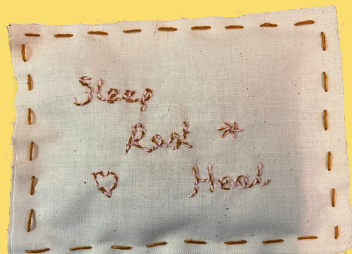
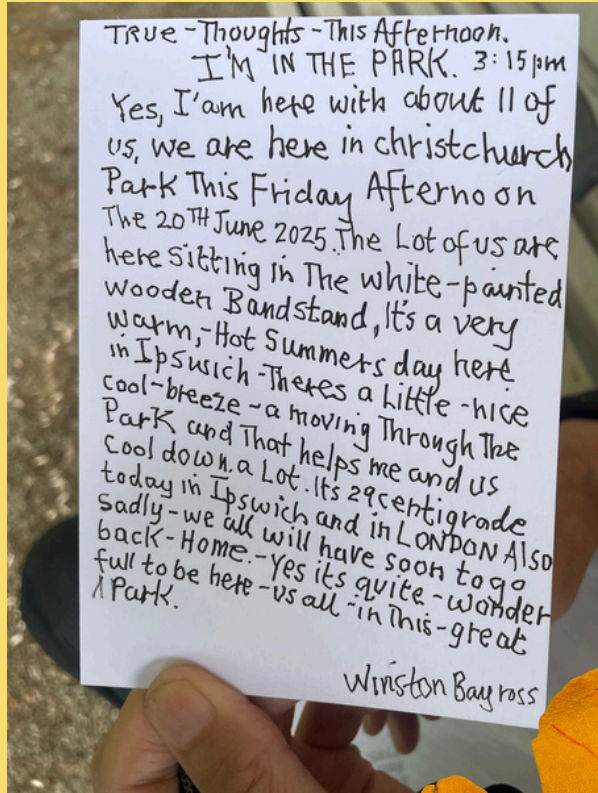
**Donna Hayward**



Honesty \* Community \* Rest \* Kindness \* Friendship \* Hope \* Strength \* Compassion  
Peace \* Loyalty \* Tolerance



# THE PHOENIX PROJECT 2025

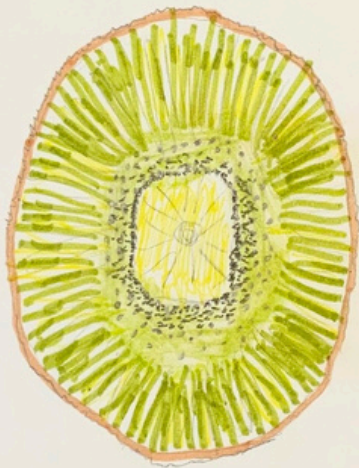




# TRUE THOUGHTS CREATIVE ACTIVITIES



Saw your Seeds .....



The Courage Fruit

- courage
- Self belief
- Patience
- Self Love
- Success
- Growth

Friday afternoons at the Quakers have been filled with all sorts of creative activities including gel plate printing, mask making, mindful walks, creative writing, singing, painting butterflies, sewing (lavender bags and felt leaves), sharing and writing poems, designing fruits and rope making!

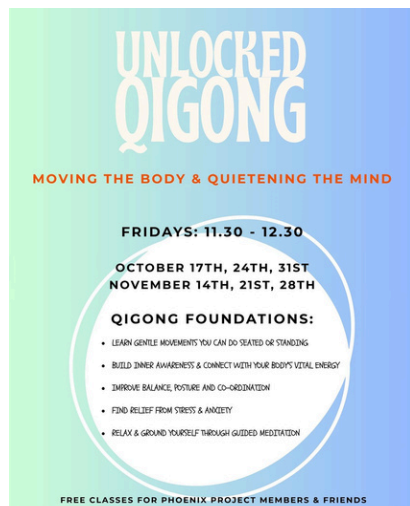
We have enjoyed visits from Ipswich Museum and have ventured out to Christchurch Mansion and the Hive to see art and photography shows. We even made seed bombs & had a go at planting trees!

Jon Fuller kindly volunteered to lead a music making and percussion session for us back in May and Carl has been really busy helping us with our garden project. We have had a few visits from Jeremy, co-presenter of the Clearwater radio show which goes out live on ICR FM. We have been sending Jeremy some of our recordings from Friday group creative conversations to be aired as part of his show!





# QIGONG



Qigong:  
'A way to get to know  
your body!'

During 2025 we have been offering Qigong sessions to Phoenix Project members on Friday mornings in the lovely light and calming space that is the Quakers main hall. Since sessions started, 23 Phoenix members have benefitted from taking part & learning gentle, relaxing movements to help ground, balance, open the body and release tension.

Sessions at the beginning of the year were supported by Suffolk Libraries and funded as part of their 'Moving Minds' programme.

*"Despite having mobility issues I've been able to participate in all of the sessions & have thoroughly enjoyed them. The gentle exercises work really well to help with my recovery & are so beneficial in reducing anxiety."*

**Tracy**



# BRIGHTEN THE CORNERS



One of the highlights of the year was a group visit to the Brighten the Corners Festival in June.

Paul and Kevin volunteered to be part of the Brighten the Corners crew and had the job of giving out programmes and helping festival goers find their way between the town centre venues.





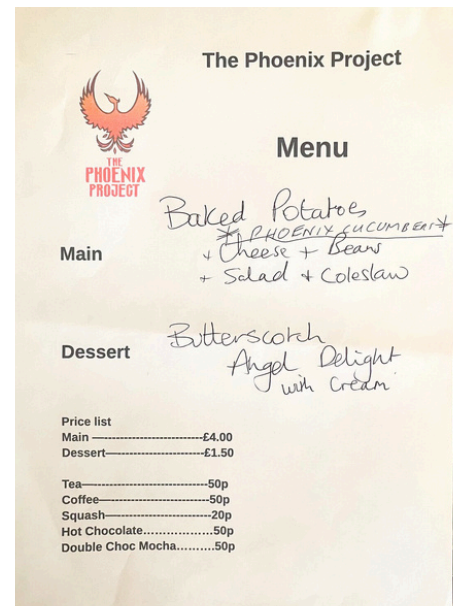
# THE PHOENIX GARDEN PROJECT



Our garden project has definitely been one of the highlights of the year - from sowing seeds, to looking after seedlings, potting on into bigger pots and watering weekly to watching our plants grow and fruit.

*"We've renovated a greenhouse where people have learned to grow food that we've eaten in our lunch club."*

Towards the end of the year we had a visit from Susannah from ActivGardens. She told the group more about ActivGardens and how they could get involved and gave us a few ideas for development of our garden project into next year..



Phoenix cucumbers on the menu!



*"We had a lovely planting session on Friday afternoon. Between us we planted tomatoes, cucumber, peppers and chilli peppers. Thank you to Carl for all his amazing help with organising and guiding the planting and for making a start on clearing out the greenhouse!"*

*We now have trays of seeds being looked after at home by a few group members and a whole proliferation of cress!"*

We were able to keep up to date on garden progress via our facebook group.





*"I really enjoyed the show. All the photos were amazing – so much talent – and they showed what a vibrant place Norwich road really is."*



*"I learned that we may be from different backgrounds and speak different languages but we all share a common bond in wanting to belong."*



In March a group of us (above) went over to Ipswich Library to see the Curious Minds art show. Jonathan (pictured right) had some of his lovely work in the show!

In February we took a walk over to Christchurch Mansion to see John Ferguson's Suffolk Creatives exhibition.

# GROUP VISITS TO IPSWICH ART SHOWS

## A PORTRAIT OF NORWICH ROAD

In July 2025 a group of people from the Phoenix Project took a trip to the Hive (a local community hub) to see a photography exhibition. The photographs on display portrayed what life is like for those who live and work on Norwich Road, Ipswich.

There were photographs of local businesses showing the beautiful diversity that Norwich Road embraces, including delicatessens with their kaleidoscope of colours and customers of all different ethnicities and cultures. Another photograph showed the Portuguese cafe which serves all different blends of coffee and delicious home made cakes. Further up the road a photograph shows the dressmaker/tailors shop which has everything that anyone could imagine, from beautiful fabrics to an assortment of threads and needles. From freshly baked bread and cakes to fruit and vegetables from around the world this myriad of small shops are not just the hub of the local community but are frequented by people from all over Ipswich. The items they sell are as diverse as the people who live and work here.



This photo by Phoenix Project member **Scott** was included in the show.

Also in the exhibition were portraits of some of the residents of Norwich road. I was particularly struck by a black and white photograph of a gentleman portraying a lifetime of experiences and stories.

The photographs in the exhibition showed a hidden side of Norwich Road that you would usually drive straight past. There is so much more to this street than a row of shops and houses. There is a community made up of very special people, with unique cultures and stories. I came away from the exhibition wanting to know more about Norwich Road and its beautifully diverse cultures.

**Written by Tracy**

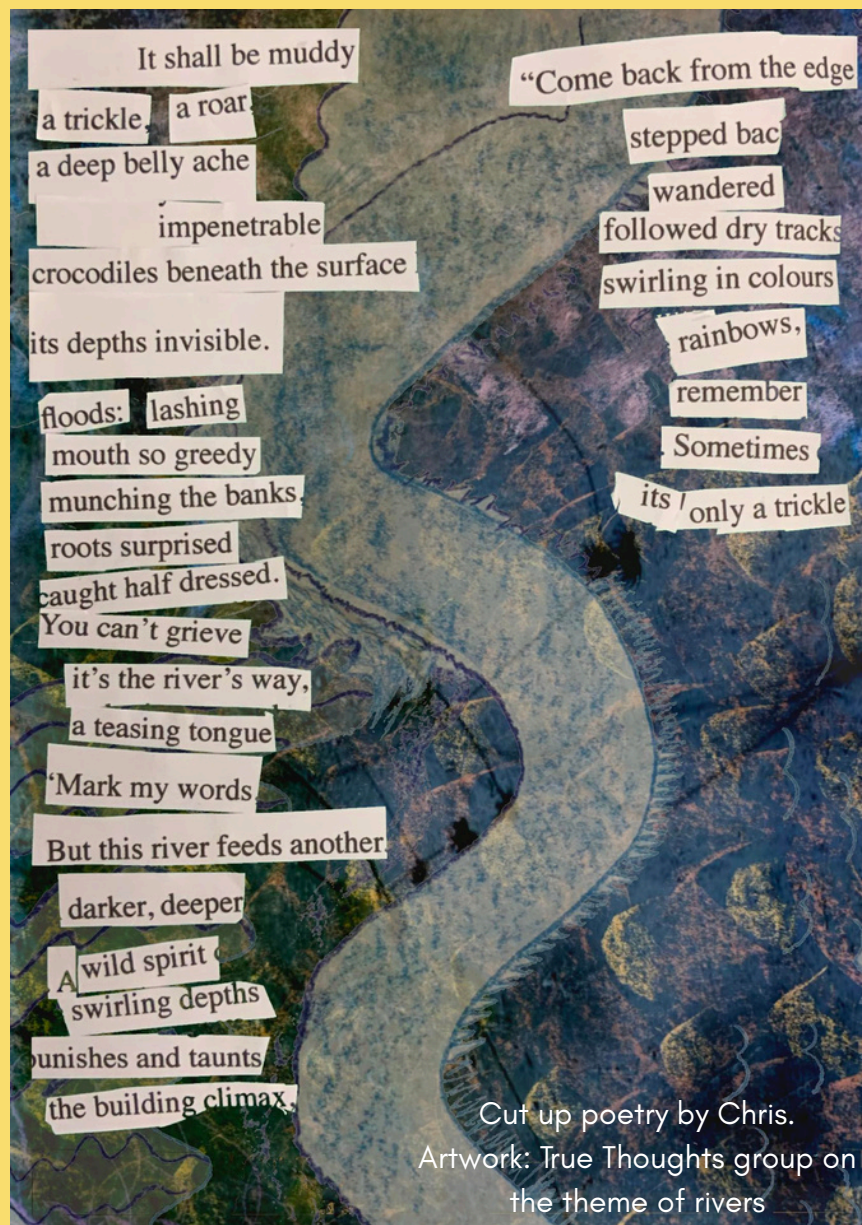




# Tranquility

As dawn breaks the sun rises  
Dancing over the sea  
Making it twinkle  
Like a thousand sparklers.  
The waves lap gently onto the shore;  
Fishermen are dotted all along the beach.  
All is calm and peaceful.  
At night the tide turns.  
Ebony water lashes the beach,  
The waves roaring angrily  
The wind whipping them into a frenzy.  
The morning calm turns to fear,  
The moon eerily shadowed by the drifting fog,  
It's cold and unwelcoming.  
Oh how I long for the morning to return  
And chase all my fears away.

by **Tracy**



Cut up poetry by Chris.  
Artwork: True Thoughts group on  
the theme of rivers

## FAVOURITE PHOENIX LUNCHES

Shepherds Pie  
Chicken Korma  
Winter Veg Stew with  
crusty bread  
Lentil Dhal  
Spaghetti Bolognese  
Lasagne

Apple Pie with Custard  
Eton Mess  
Brownies

*"I enjoyed loads of grub today. Veggie  
Chilli Con Carne - very nice too! Two  
platefuls, yummy!"*

**John**



Ending 2025 in fine Phoenix Project style - Christmas raffle and a sing song!



# THE PHOENIX MUSEUM

Back in March and April we had two great visits from Alison and Jade from Ipswich Museum with their Ipswich in a Box collections, covering aspects of social and natural history. These were really well attended sessions.

As a result of these visits we ran a series of True Thoughts sessions inspired by some of the objects we'd seen. We painted our own butterflies inspired by the butterfly collection. We thought about how can we support butterflies as many are now endangered species. We had a great discussion about bands we remembered playing in Ipswich at the Baths, the Manor Ballroom & the Gaumont (now Regent). The Byrds, Jimi Hendrix and the Beatles all played in Ipswich!! We also talked about Ipswich's industrial past. Some group members had memories of working at the Phillips and Piper Clothing Works which later became Piper's Court.

Tracy brought in a set of Jacks - a playground game from the 1970s to add to our Phoenix Museum of objects that connect us to our past. She told us about her memories of the game and a few of us had a go at playing it!



This 'Reality Check Ruby' doll was brought in by Donna for our Phoenix Museum. Below right - Robert with his 1976 Cricket Almanac & below Jon's Corgi Messerschmitt.

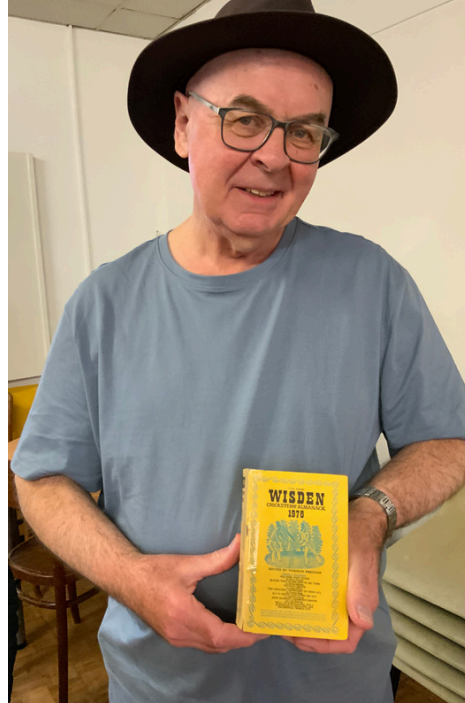


I enjoyed the presentation at True Thoughts - very interesting. If you think you know everything about Ipswich... you're wrong!

**John**



Inspired by our visit from Ipswich Museum we had a go at rope making - separating out and twisting together the fibres from a flax plant. Between 1625 - 1821 Ipswich was a significant centre for rope-making, driven by the needs of its shipbuilding industry and the maritime trade along the River Orwell.





# Volunteer Spotlight : Robert and Hilary

**Volunteers play a vital role in the running of the Phoenix Project - welcoming members, supporting creative sessions & helping to prepare weekly lunches.**

"I've been involved with the Phoenix Project since its inception in 2009 as a natural follow on from working with both John and Donna at East Suffolk MIND. At that point I was involved on a support basis and attended trustee meetings as part of my remit with NSPCC.

When I retired in 2011 and moved away I remained in contact with both John and Donna. I returned to the area in 2019. I paid a visit to the Project one Friday morning and caught up with members and recent events. My interest remained particularly around the ways in which members managed to meet up during the latter stages of Covid. I visited the Project a few times after that, getting to know more members.

The summer of 2024 brought us some really sad news when John died. I began to volunteer at the project on a regular basis, initially to help Donna and the volunteers to keep the Project running. I've now been volunteering regularly for 18 months and I've temporarily held the post of Secretary of the Trustees. I find the weekly Project meetings enjoyable and gain more awareness each week of the interactions between members and how they interlink with each other.

I'm certainly worn out when I get home on a Friday but hey, washing up is a bit of a treat when I spend the rest of the week filling my dishwasher!"

**Hilary**



Hilary at the Phoenix lunch counter - apron in hand!

**Volunteers  
needed**

If you're interested in becoming a Phoenix volunteer we'd love to hear from you!



"Hello, my name is Robert Rainbird, and I am a Trustee with the Phoenix Project. I have been involved with the Phoenix Project for about 12 years, first as a service user and then latterly as a Trustee. The Phoenix Project are a very valuable part of the wider community and I feel proud to be involved with the group.

Being a people person I like to think that I am reliable and approachable and present a friendly face to everyone involved with the project, be it service users, staff and other volunteers alike.

One of the highlights of the past year for me has been taking part in 'True Thoughts' which together with the regular Qigong sessions goes from strength to strength. In conclusion, I would like to say I have made some valuable friendships during my time with the Project."



# FINANCIAL REPORT

## INCOME RECEIVED FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25

Donations	£1,502.26
Catering	£2,346.57
Peoples Health Trust supported through Health Lottery	£7,466.00
East - Active Communities fund	
Suffolk County Council - locality funds	£1,980.00
Suffolk and NE Essex ICB	£9,900.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£23,194.83</b>

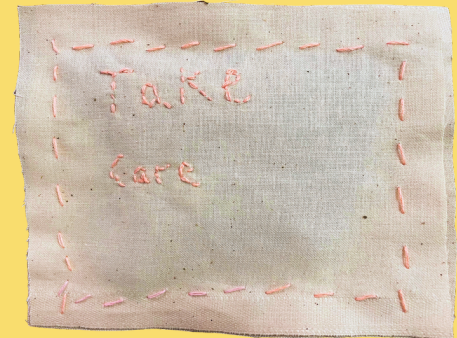


Bruce (Director ICM), Gulshan (High Sheriff), Carl (Phoenix Project member),  
Donna (Project Coordinator)

**Thank you to all our funders for their support!**

### **Phoenix Project board of trustees:**

Tracy Corbett - Chair  
David Plowman - Treasurer  
Hilary Offord - Secretary  
Robert Rainbird - Trustee  
Cad Taylor - Trustee



### **Contact Us:**

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[www.phoenixprojectipswich.com](http://www.phoenixprojectipswich.com)  
[facebook.com/truethoughtsradio](https://facebook.com/truethoughtsradio)  
[facebook.com/the phoenixprojectipswich](https://facebook.com/the phoenixprojectipswich)





## PHOENIX PROJECT INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2024/25

### GENERAL PHOENIX (NON-RESTRICTED ACCOUNT )

balance b/f from previous year £ 5,148.46

#### INCOME

£

Income from service users and catering	£	2,346.57
Donations	£	1,502.26
Raffle	£	-
Tombola	£	-

**total income** £ 3,848.83

**Balance of account as at 31st March 2025** £ 3,535.86

#### EXPENDITURE

£

Room Hire	£	1,460.00
Sessional work	£	2,235.00
Catering Expenses	£	351.78
Stationery	£	30.00
Costs of Governance	£	621.70
Phone	£	43.74
Equipment	£	411.62
Service Users Activities	£	75.59
Web Subscriptions and Domain	£	232.00

**total** £ 5,461.43

### PEOPLE'S HEALTH TRUST - TRUE THOUGHTS (Restricted Account )

balance b/f from previous year £ 3,565.80

#### INCOME

£ 7,466.00

**total** £ 7,466.00

**Balance of account as at 31st March 2025** £ 0.00

#### EXPENDITURE

Stationery	£	19.55
Sessional Work	£	8,400.00
Publicity	£	152.00
Volunteer expenses	£	405.00
Venue Hire	£	1,002.00
Phone	£	131.22
website	£	30.00
laptops	£	-
project management	£	-
Events	£	859.07

Refreshments £ 32.96

**total** £ 11,031.80

### Suffolk County Council Locality Funds (restricted)

#### Income

£1,980.00

**total** £ 1,980.00

**Balance of account as at 31st March 2025** £0.00

#### Expenditure

Venue Hire	£	980.00
<u>Lunch Club Coordinator</u>	£	<u>1,000.00</u>

**total** £ 1,980.00

### **Suffolk and NE ESSEX ICB (restricted)**



Income	£ 9,900.00
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<b>total</b>	<b>£ 9,900.00</b>
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Balance of account as at March 31st 2025	£ 6,465.00
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<b>Expenditure</b>	
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Venue Hire	£ 840.00
Project Coordinator	£ 1,105.00
Lunch Club Facilitator	£ 660.00
Creative coordinator	£ 360.00
Volunteer expenses	£ 470.00
Safeguarding training	£ -

<b>total</b>	<b>£ 3,435.00</b>
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<b>TOTAL OF ALL ACCOUNTS</b>	
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INCOME	£ 23,194.83
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EXPENDITURE	£ 21,908.23
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BALANCE B/F from 2023/24	£ 8,714.26
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<b>BALANCE OF ALL ACCOUNTS AS AT 31st March 2025</b>	<b>£ 10,000.86</b>
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