



## **FSA Annual Report for 2024- 2025**

### **Chair's Report**

Despite the significant global and geopolitical events that have impacted the economy and our sector this year, the Forest School Association has demonstrated remarkable resilience as a small charity. Our ability to navigate these challenges with determination and adaptability is a testament to the professionalism and dedication of our staff team. Annual reports serve as a platform to celebrate our triumphs, critically examine our challenges, learn from our experiences, and incorporate your valuable feedback into our future strategies.

With University of Liverpool and a stellar team of academics, we hosted the first International Forest School Research symposium, a successful event spearheaded by our project officer, Nic Harding. We are proud of this achievement and look forward to building on this success with future events.

Our conference was as popular as ever. Again, staff and many volunteers, led and inspired by Nic, worked with the Essex Outdoors team to offer a rich weekend of 'Kindling Curiosity, Courage, and Resilience', providing valuable opportunities to meet and formally consult with members. Nell Seal was exceptionally busy, holding space for Endorsed Trainers, Recognised Providers and Local Affiliated Groups; her community-building skills and dedication to professionalism continue to reap rewards for the FSA.

The accommodation policy caused some members consternation, while others welcomed it; after complaints, we sought external guidance, recognising we did not consult sufficiently with individuals/ groups impacted by it. We have strengthened our commitment to working with experts and members to promote equality, equity, diversity, and belonging within the FSA.

Tilly Hogrebe joined our skilled and committed staff team in the Summer, immediately demonstrating skills above and beyond the Administration Coordinator role. We recognise Mimi Eastell's valuable contributions to marketing and communications; this role has been formalised in recognition of her expertise for the management team.

At our Strategy Weekend, we valued the expertise of clean-language facilitators as staff and trustees navigated some tricky issues around finances, structure and strategic direction, making the difficult decision not to hold a national conference this Autumn and to make the CEO role redundant, both of which require new ways of doing things. We are grateful to Gareth for all his hard work and for bringing a much-needed business perspective to the FSA; his guiding hand has helped build a respected professional association that is regularly consulted by other NGOS and valued by members.



We are grateful to Paul Moseley and Froo Signore, trustees who left the board this year, and Laura Harvey and Emma Lawson, who will stand down with me at the AGM. Each has brought valuable perspectives to the FSA, which will continue to benefit from their contributions.

This report will be my last as I step down and welcome Matt Harder, as the incoming chair, and new trustees. Serving the FSA with past and present trustees has been a privilege; I have learned much from them. Matt and the FSA board will find fresh ways to lead and support the staff team, build on the new structure, consult with members, and grow our professional association.

I commend this report to you as evidence of the important work the staff have done on your behalf this year, the commitment and dedication of everyone involved in the FSA's mission of advocating for 'quality Forest School for all', the exciting plans for the year ahead, and the future-proofing we are undertaking.

Sarah Lawfull, FSA Chair

## **Committee Reports**

### **Policy and Procedures Committee (staff and trustees)**

The committee has met four times (quarterly) since the 2024 AGM, developing, updating, and implementing the FSA's national internal and external policies. These have included, but are not exclusive to, EDI, conflicts of interest, privacy, communications, complaints, and appeals procedures.

New draft policies and policy updates are passed from the P&P committee to the FSA's other committees, which oversee the areas covered in the policies. They can then comment on/amend the policies before they go forward to the main FSA Board for approval and adoption.

Geoff Mason, P&P Committee Chair



### **Internal Committee Report** (staff and trustees)

The committee has met three times this year.

Main functions and focus this past year:

- Producing the Terms of Reference document.
- Following the strategy weekend in March 2024, the committee met to work on creating a guidance document for Basecamp communications. We will review this in June.
- Recommendations made that the Finance and Risk Committee will work with Nic on options for the NETA App.

Emma Briscoe, Internal Committee Chair

### **External Committee Report** (staff and trustees)

The committee has met four times this year.

Main functions and focus this past year:

- Following complaints, there was a discussion and decision made about signing communications on behalf of the (named) committee, to clarify where the communication is coming from, rather than a named person.
- The committee collaborated on writing the Terms of Reference (June 2024)
- Challenges of WhatsApp communications and issues facing local groups have been explored - having Nell Seal as the bridge between local groups and the national FSA is proving fruitful.
- Added working principle statements to the 'approachability' value.
- Supported the use of data generated from the skills audit to identify trustee needs for trustee recruitment

Emma Briscoe, External Committee Secretary

### **Finance, Audit and Risk Committee** (staff and trustees)

This committee functions as the FSA treasurer - see report below.



## **FSA Annual Management Report 2024-2025**

### **April 2025**

#### **Executive Summary**

This annual management report provides an overview of the Forest School Association's activities, achievements, and strategic developments from May 2024 to April 2025. During this period, the FSA has undergone significant changes while continuing to advance its mission of promoting quality Forest School education.

#### **Key Achievements and Milestones**

##### **1. Organisational Restructuring**

- After careful consideration, the FSA made the CEO role redundant from 13th June 2025. This change is part of a move towards a more sustainable and efficient leadership model.
- Matt Harder, the current Deputy Chair, is working closely with the internal committee to ensure a smooth transition and maintain operational continuity.
- A new operational framework is being developed to define roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes, ensuring clarity and efficiency as the organisation adapts to the absence of a dedicated CEO.

##### **2. Strategic Positioning**

- The FSA has redefined its role as a learning community, emphasising collaboration among members to define and refine best practices in Forest School education.
- This shift aims to make the FSA more inclusive and responsive to the needs of its members while maintaining its position as the UK's leading professional body for Forest School.

##### **3. Events and Conferences**

- The 2024 conference was a success, bringing together practitioners and providing opportunities for learning and networking.
- The symposium in 2024, held in partnership with Liverpool University, was well-received, with international participation and valuable insights shared.

##### **4. App Development**

- Progress has been made on the development of the FSA app, with internal testing and feedback collection underway.
- Efforts are ongoing to secure funding for further development and to ensure the app meets the needs of Forest School leaders.

##### **5. Membership and Community Engagement**

- Membership numbers have remained stable, with a focus on enhancing the value offered to members.
- Work has continued to strengthen ties with local groups and to support their activities.



## **Financial Performance**

The FSA has maintained a steady financial position throughout the year, with careful management of resources. The profit and loss accounts show a surplus, reflecting prudent financial stewardship.

## **Challenges and Areas for Improvement**

### **1. Operational Framework**

The transition to a different leadership model will require a clear operational framework. We are working diligently to ensure all roles and responsibilities are defined, fostering a culture of trust and clarity across the organisation. This process remains a core challenge, as it is critical to ensuring operational efficiency and effective governance.

### **2. Staff and Volunteer Support**

Concerns about staff morale and well-being, particularly in relation to event planning and operational changes, have been a significant challenge. We are actively addressing these by developing clear communication, and expectation setting, to ensure staff and volunteers feel valued and supported during this period of transition.

### **3. Event Planning**

The decision not to hold a national conference in 2025 reflects the need for careful consideration of event formats and financial implications. Alternative event formats are being explored to maintain member engagement, but a clear strategy is still in development.

## **Recommendations**

### **1. Finalise the Operational Framework**

Complete the development of the operational framework to provide clarity and support for staff and volunteers.

### **2. Develop a Clear Event Strategy**

Establish a clear strategy for events in 2025 and beyond, considering financial implications and member needs.

### **3. Enhance Staff and Volunteer Support**

Implement measures to support staff and volunteers, including clear communication and expectation setting.

### **4. Continue App Development**

Secure funding and resources to progress the app development, ensuring it meets the needs of Forest School leaders.

The FSA remains committed to its mission and to serving its members. By addressing the challenges and implementing the recommendations outlined, we can continue to promote quality Forest School education and support our community effectively.



## Membership Statistics

Membership Type	2023-2024	2024-2025
Individual Members	1038	938
Trainee Members	214	169
Associate Members	129	105
Recognised Providers	74	72
Registered Trainers	2	4
Endorsed Trainers	14	18
Total Paid Memberships	1485	1306

*Note: Membership figures were adjusted in February 2025 following an error relating to members paying by Direct Debit.*

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## Projects and Initiatives

### App Development:

The development of the FSA app has progressed, with internal playtesting conducted and feedback being collected. Efforts are underway to address technical issues and to prepare for external testing. The app aims to support Forest School leaders in evaluating their programs and ensuring alignment with best practices. Funding opportunities are being explored, including a potential Knowledge Transfer Partnership with Herts University.

### Newsletter:

The newsletter continues to perform well, with over 5,000 recipients and approximately 38% actively opening it. Work is needed to clean up the Mailchimp account to remove inactive accounts and reduce costs.

### Certified Courses Scheme (CCS):

There is ongoing demand for a mechanism to advertise high-quality training. The CCS could serve this need, and a business case is being developed to assess feasibility.

### Presentations and Webinars:

FSA staff and volunteers have delivered lectures and webinars, including a presentation at Häme University in Finland. Additional support is needed to maintain the webinar archive and ensure sustainability.

### Recognised Provider Scheme:

Recognised Providers: The scheme continues to be promoted through free half-termly webinars and social media. The Recognised Provider Working Group is currently developing an online support resource for both applicants and existing providers. A trial series of themed online discussion sessions is also underway, shaped by topics identified by Recognised Providers themselves.

### Endorsed Trainer Scheme:

The scheme continues to grow steadily, with new applicants joining each year. A face-to-face CPD



gathering brought endorsed trainers together from across the UK, and quarterly online meetings have now been introduced to support ongoing connection and development. Trainers are currently contributing to the review of the national suite of Forest School qualifications in partnership with the Awarding Organisation Forum. They are also involved in revising the scheme's Terms of Reference and drafting new Guidance Notes for the wider membership.

### **Local Groups**

The network of Local Groups, currently active across England, meets quarterly with FSA National to share successes, discuss challenges, and strengthen regional practice. Work is underway to introduce a new annual declaration process to support good governance, and to explore revenue-sharing models aimed at increasing local capacity and sustainability.

### **Symposium:**

Work is progressing on an extended abstract for the symposium proceedings. Plans are being considered for a follow-up event in 2027.

### **Jobs:**

The process for job postings is functioning efficiently.

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### **Governance and Leadership**

The FSA has undergone significant changes in its organisational structure, with the CEO role being made redundant from 13th June 2025 as part of a move towards a more sustainable leadership model. As the CEO role comes to an end, the trustees and staff are focused on developing a new operational framework that distributes leadership responsibilities across the organisation. This restructuring is designed to increase operational flexibility and ensure that the FSA remains responsive to member needs.

The development of the operational framework is closely tied to the transition plan, with a focus on clarifying roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes to support the distributed leadership model.

The decision to make the CEO role redundant was made after careful consideration by the trustees, with the aim of creating a more sustainable structure. The trustees and staff have been actively involved in the restructuring process, ensuring that the transition is managed smoothly and that the FSA continues to meet the needs of its members. The membership will be kept informed about these changes, and feedback will be welcomed as part of our commitment to transparency and inclusivity.

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## Finances

The FSA's DRAFT profit and loss accounts for the year ended 31st August 2024 are as follows:

### Forest School Association

#### Detailed Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31st August 2024

	31.8.24		31.8.23	
	£	£	£	£
<b>Turnover</b>				
Memberships	52,174		52,317	
Conferences	48,920		16,208	
Donations	25		700	
Grant funding	17,246		8,562	
Book sales	6,772		16,860	
		125,137		94,647
<b>Other income</b>				
Sundry receipts		4,816		1,078
		129,953		95,725
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Rent	3,600		1,850	
Insurance	267		267	
Wages	59,436		58,783	
Social security	300		417	
Pensions	1,393		1,328	
Subcontractors	16,670		15,666	
Computer expenses	6,645		2,268	
Advertising	1,326		1,130	
Administration fees	4,915		5,758	
Meeting and conference expenses	20,672		25,142	
Sundry expenses	600		11	
Conference accrual correction	(45,171)		-	
Ashden Trust book expenses	1,174		16,906	
Nature Premium Campaign	-		17,246	
Accountancy	1,018		1,284	
		72,845		148,056
		57,108		(52,331)
<b>Finance costs</b>				
Bank charges		1,938		1,391
<b>NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>		55,170		(53,722)

The full accounts are available on the Charity Commission website.



### Future Plans and Strategic Direction

The FSA is committed to continuing its work in promoting quality Forest School education. Looking ahead, the FSA will focus on the following specific goals to address key challenges and advance our strategic objectives:

- **Finalising the New Operational Framework:** We will complete the development of the operational framework to ensure effective leadership and governance, providing clarity for staff, volunteers, and trustees as we transition to a different leadership model.
- **Exploring and Implementing Alternative Event Formats:** We will establish a clear event strategy for 2025 and beyond, exploring innovative formats such as virtual webinars, regional workshops, and hybrid events to maintain member engagement while balancing financial considerations.
- **Strengthening Our Digital Presence and Securing Funding for the App:** We will actively pursue funding opportunities, including partnerships and grants, to support the next phase of the FSA app's development, ensuring it becomes a valuable tool for Forest School leaders.
- **Enhancing the Support System for Staff and Volunteers:** We will implement robust support measures to ensure staff and volunteers feel valued and supported during this period of significant organisational change.
- **Strengthening Ties with Local Groups:** We will explore revenue-sharing models and collaborative initiatives with local groups to enhance community engagement and support grassroots Forest School activities.

By focusing on these priorities, the FSA aims to build on its successes, address the challenges faced, and ensure it remains a vibrant and effective professional body.

## Document Details

Filename:	FOR S-Limited company accounts 2024 FINAL.PDF
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## Signature Details

Name:	Tilly Hogrebe
Email:	enquiries@forestschoollassociation.org
Date & Time:	27/05/2025 10:36:22 AM (BST)
IP Address:	83.105.68.123
Signing Statement:	Forest School Association confirms that the information is correct and complete to the best of their knowledge and belief.

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**Report of the Directors and**  
**Unaudited Financial Statements**  
**for the Year Ended 31st August 2024**  
**for**  
**Forest School Association**

Contents of the Financial Statements  
for the Year Ended 31st August 2024

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Forest School Association

Company Information  
for the Year Ended 31st August 2024

**DIRECTORS:**

**G S Mason  
Ms E A R Horseman  
Mrs S E Lawfull  
Mrs F Signore  
L H Ames  
M F Harder  
P A Moseley  
Ms E R Briscoe  
Ms L Harvey  
Ms E L Lawson**

**REGISTERED OFFICE:**

**Unit A  
82 James Carter Road  
Mildenhall  
IP28 7DE**

**REGISTERED NUMBER:**

**08164851 (England and Wales)**

**ACCOUNTANTS:**

**Laytons  
Chartered Accountants  
6 Manchester Road  
Buxton  
Derbyshire  
SK17 6SB**

Forest School Association

Report of the Directors  
for the Year Ended 31st August 2024

**The directors present their report with the financial statements of the company for the year ended 31st August 2024.**

**DIRECTORS**

**The directors shown below have held office during the whole of the period from 1st September 2023 to the date of this report.**

**G S Mason  
Ms E A R Horseman  
Mrs S E Lawfull  
Mrs F Signore  
L H Ames  
M F Harder**

**Other changes in directors holding office are as follows:**

**L E Ambrose - resigned 17th March 2024  
Ms C A Middleton - resigned 17th March 2024  
P A Moseley - appointed 3rd October 2023  
Ms E R Briscoe - appointed 1st June 2024  
Ms L Harvey - appointed 1st June 2024  
Ms E L Lawson - appointed 1st June 2024**

**This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.**

**ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD:**

**G S Mason - Director**

**24th May 2025**

Forest School Association

Abridged Income Statement  
for the Year Ended 31st August 2024

	<b>31.8.24</b> <b>£</b>	<b>31.8.23</b> <b>£</b>
<b>GROSS SURPLUS</b>	<b>129,953</b>	<b>95,725</b>
<b>Administrative expenses</b>	<b>74,783</b>	<b>149,447</b>
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) and SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) BEFORE TAXATION</b>	<b>55,170</b>	<b>(53,722)</b>
<b>Tax on surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR</b>	<b>55,170</b>	<b>(53,722)</b>

The notes form part of these financial statements

Abridged Balance Sheet  
31st August 2024

	31.8.24 £	31.8.23 £
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Debtors	1,349	2,494
Cash at bank	44,442	50,104
	<u>45,791</u>	<u>52,598</u>
<b>CREDITORS</b>		
Amounts falling due within one year	14,947	76,924
	<u>14,947</u>	<u>76,924</u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS/(LIABILITIES)</b>	<u>30,844</u>	<u>(24,326)</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<u>30,844</u>	<u>(24,326)</u>
 <b>RESERVES</b>		
Income and expenditure account	30,844	(24,326)
	<u>30,844</u>	<u>(24,326)</u>

The company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31st August 2024.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31st August 2024 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- (a) ensuring that the company keeps accounting records which comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

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

All the members have consented to the preparation of an abridged Income Statement and an abridged Balance Sheet for the year ended 31st August 2024 in accordance with Section 444(2A) of the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors and authorised for issue on 24th May 2025 and were signed on its behalf by:

**G S Mason - Director**

**1. STATUTORY INFORMATION**

Forest School Association is a private company, limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales. The company's registered number and registered office address can be found on the Company Information page.

**2. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**Basis of preparing the financial statements**

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" including the provisions of Section 1A "Small Entities" and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

**Turnover**

Turnover is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable, excluding discounts, rebates, value added tax and other sales taxes.

**Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits**

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the company's pension scheme are charged to profit or loss in the period to which they relate.

**3. EMPLOYEES AND DIRECTORS**

The average number of employees during the year was 3 (2023 - 3).

Chartered Accountants' Report to the Board of Directors  
on the Unaudited Financial Statements of  
Forest School Association

**In order to assist you to fulfil your duties under the Companies Act 2006, we have prepared for your approval the financial statements of Forest School Association for the year ended 31st August 2024 which comprise the Abridged Income Statement, Abridged Balance Sheet and the related notes from the company's accounting records and from information and explanations you have given us.**

**As a practising member firm of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), we are subject to its ethical and other professional requirements which are detailed within the ICAEW's regulations and guidance at <http://www.icaew.com/en/membership/regulations-standards-and-guidance>.**

**This report is made solely to the Board of Directors of Forest School Association, as a body, in accordance with our terms of engagement. Our work has been undertaken solely to prepare for your approval the financial statements of Forest School Association and state those matters that we have agreed to state to the Board of Directors of Forest School Association, as a body, in this report in accordance with ICAEW Technical Release 07/16AAF. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than Forest School Association and its Board of Directors, as a body, for our work or for this report.**

**It is your duty to ensure that Forest School Association has kept adequate accounting records and to prepare statutory financial statements that give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities, financial position and profit of Forest School Association. You consider that Forest School Association is exempt from the statutory audit requirement for the year.**

**We have not been instructed to carry out an audit or a review of the financial statements of Forest School Association. For this reason, we have not verified the accuracy or completeness of the accounting records or information and explanations you have given to us and we do not, therefore, express any opinion on the statutory financial statements.**

**Laytons  
Chartered Accountants  
6 Manchester Road  
Buxton  
Derbyshire  
SK17 6SB**

**24th May 2025**

Forest School Association

Detailed Income and Expenditure Account  
for the Year Ended 31st August 2024

	31.8.24		31.8.23	
	£	£	£	£
<b>Turnover</b>				
<b>Memberships</b>	52,174		52,317	
<b>Conferences</b>	48,920		16,208	
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<b>Grant funding</b>	17,246		8,562	
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<b>Other income</b>				
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<b>Rent</b>	3,600		1,850	
<b>Insurance</b>	267		267	
<b>Wages</b>	59,436		58,783	
<b>Social security</b>	300		417	
<b>Pensions</b>	1,393		1,328	
<b>Subcontractors</b>	16,670		15,666	
<b>Computer expenses</b>	6,645		2,268	
<b>Advertising</b>	1,326		1,130	
<b>Administration fees</b>	4,915		5,758	
<b>Meeting and conference expenses</b>	20,672		25,142	
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<b>Conference accrual correction</b>	(45,171)		-	
<b>Ashden Trust book expenses</b>	1,174		16,906	
<b>Nature Premium Campaign</b>	-		17,246	
<b>Accountancy</b>	1,018		1,284	
		72,845		148,056
		57,108		(52,331)
<b>Finance costs</b>				
<b>Bank charges</b>		1,938		1,391
<b>NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>		55,170		(53,722)

## Independent Examiner's report to the Directors of Forest School Association

I report on the accounts of the Association for the year ended 31 August 2024, which are set out on pages 3 to 7 of the annual accounts.

### Respective Responsibilities of Directors and Examiner

The Directors are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Directors consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an Independent Examination is needed. The company's gross income has not exceeded £250,000. I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of ICAEW.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act
- To following the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

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

### Independent Examiner's Statement

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

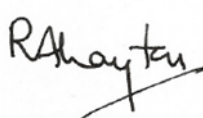
(1) Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- To keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006
- To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities

Have not been met; or

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

Name:



Robert Layton



**Laytons** CHARTERED  
ACCOUNTANTS  
6 Manchester Road, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 6SB  
PHONE: 01298 77997 FAX: 01298 72803

Relevant Professional qualification or body: ICAEW

Address: Laytons Chartered Accountants, 6 Manchester Road, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 9SB

Date: 25-04-2025