

The Atkinson Development Trust

Improving local people's lives through art and heritage.



Paper My Wishes, The Many, Suhail Shaikh, The Atkinson 2023. Exhibition programmed by The Atkinson for between 25th November 2023 – 24th February 2024.

The Atkinson Development Trust donated £4,300 towards a community engagement project to run alongside Suhail's exhibition.

Trustees' Annual Report 2023-2024

The Atkinson Development Trust
Trustees' Annual Report
for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Reference and Administrative Details:

Charity name: The Atkinson Development Trust

Registered charity number: 1161020

Principal address:

The Atkinson

Lord Street

Southport

MERSEYSIDE

PR8 1DB

Trustees:

Alice Clark (Chair)

Ian Bryden (Treasurer)

Stephen Whittle (Designated Representative, The Atkinson)

Lindsey Holding (Former Interim Chair, now Trustee and Administrator)

Luke Barnes

Laura Bell

Jill Carruthers

Gemma Grady-Hill

Dom Potter

Bernadette Reynolds

Matt Smith

The Atkinson Development Trust – Annual Report

Contents

1. Executive Summary.....	4
2. Format and function of the Trust.....	6
3. Overview of Activities in 2023/24	7
4. Financial Review	11

1. Executive Summary

2023/24 continued to be a period of recovery post the Covid-19 pandemic, but also a time of transition.

First of all, a change in leadership: long-serving Chair – Jo Kay stepped down after many years of dedication, Jo's service saw the Trust grow and support The Atkinson in many acquisitions and projects. Trustee, Lindsey Holding stepped up as Interim Chair for a brief period stepping down once a more permanent Chair – Alice Clark was installed towards the end of 2023.

Meetings continue to switch between in person and via Zoom, which is still considered to be a good overall formula. Furthermore, the Trust has since purchased a camera and microphone kit to allow for hybrid meetings via Zoom should they not be available to attend in person helping to maintain the momentum and enabling the Trustees to contribute remotely.

In person meetings are held at The Atkinson where possible, but on occasion have been held at The Vincent Hotel on Lord Street, or in Southport Town Hall.

The Wellbeing Choir continues to be successful under a paid model with up to 50 members during the year and several public engagements.

Overall, this has been a year of progress, with much work being done to strengthen the Board, and to equip us to become more effective for 2024-2025.

1.1. Who we are

The Atkinson Development Trust (TADT) is a small charity run by a committed Board of skilled volunteers and a part-time paid Administrator - all have a shared love of The Atkinson and Sefton.

We believe in the transformative power of art, and that communities thrive best when they have civic pride, a sense of place and a feeling of connection and heritage within a community. The Atkinson Development Trust was established to help The Atkinson use its collections and building to make a positive impact on local people's lives and to tell Sefton's stories.

The Atkinson is a council-owned arts centre in the heart of Southport, which serves the whole borough of Sefton. The Atkinson houses free-to-access galleries, a museum, and Southport's main library, plus a main fixed-seating theatre and smaller flexible seating Studio used for ticketed events spanning all types of performing arts, talks and film. Added to this there is a gift shop as well as a social enterprise café which is run by Autism Initiatives.



1.2. What we do

The Trust was set up to work in partnership with The Atkinson. We raise money from individuals, businesses, and funding bodies to support The Atkinson in using its heritage and art collections to connect with people.

Our purpose is to:

- Support The Atkinson
- Share Sefton's stories
- Use art, heritage, and culture to enhance the lives of local people and visitors.

Social impact is our primary focus: we have particular interest in supporting projects which benefit the wellbeing of the more disadvantaged and under-represented people in our local communities. For example, children in areas of economic deprivation, disabled people and their families, or older people at risk of loneliness and isolation. We also want to continue to positively steward our members and supporters to continue their enjoyment and affection for The Atkinson.

More broadly, our work aims to connect people with local stories and improve access to the collections and the building. We support conservation and acquisitions when this enables new stories to be shared with the public or unlocks new engagement projects.

We work supportively with The Atkinson to expand and enhance their work. We do not work directly with beneficiaries, and we do not influence the programming or running of the venue. The Trust operates within the geographic area of Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council (Sefton MBC). Our work is primarily aimed at, but not limited to, those within the administrative area of Sefton Council and is concerned with the arts, cultural and heritage managed by Sefton MBC with a particular focus on The Atkinson.

Our ability to step outside the funding and strategic restrictions associated with the public sector means we can apply for different funding and open conversations with potential donors which a Council-run service would struggle to have. It has also allowed us to maximise public donations by claiming Gift Aid where possible.

1.3. Our aims

To connect people with local stories and (global) cultural activity: Encouraging the public to participate in and contribute to arts, cultural and heritage activities. We want to bring people together, connect them with their community, celebrate the cultural heritage of the area and beyond to enable creative expression.

To improve access to and engagement with the collections and the building: Opening up Sefton's art, culture, and heritage to everyone. This might mean improving physical access through better facilities or supporting the restoration of an artwork to enable it to go on public display.

To have a positive impact on local people's lives: Facilitating engagement with cultural activity for the positive impact it can have upon the lives and wellbeing of the public. We have a particular interest in people who are typically under-represented among arts audiences due to a range of social, economic, and physical barriers which they may experience.

Statutory declaration: The Trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant.

2. Format and function of the Trust

2.1. Structure

The Atkinson Development Trust (TADT) is a charitable incorporated organisation which was registered as a charity with the Charity Commission on 23 March 2015.

The Trust is governed by a Board who are Trustees of the charity. TADT supports equal opportunities, and we welcome applications from all suitably qualified persons regardless of their race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation, or age. Within those guidelines, prospective Trustees are targeted according to the skills needed by the Board. After recruitment and vetting, Trustee applicants are invited to attend a meeting as a guest, after which they are formally invited to become a Trustee. All Trustees are briefed on their responsibilities as Trustees prior to their acceptance of the role and guidance documents are issued as part of an induction process. They have individual and collective responsibility for the management of the charity and its funds.

2.2. Board Recruitment and Organisational Development

Original and long serving Chair - Jo Kay - stepped down on 4th May 2023, and Lindsey Holding was elected as Interim Chair for the coming year.

The Trust recruited three new board members: Alice Clark, Dom Potter and Gemma Grady Hill.

In addition to new Trustees, the concept of subgroups was introduced with the objectives of keeping momentum once actions have been sanctioned and to allow Board members to lean into their respective skill sets of project management, fundraising, membership etc. simultaneously, Trello – an online project management space was brought in as a way to improve tracking of actions – for quick reference and future evaluation as provides a more visual way of working with actions added as checklists, it provides a space to collaborate online for those in the subgroups and a place to share documents and information more easily than navigating through the Trust's Google Drive. It is also used as a 'Noticeboard' with meeting details, papers and zoom links shared to the main dashboard meaning everything is 'to hand' for all users.

Towards the end of 2023 the Board was sad to say goodbye to Trustees; Marie Davies, Margaret Jolley and Helen Binbaum due to changes in health or family circumstances. Both Jenny Cope (Museum Futures Trainee) and Emma Harrison (Non-Trustee but as a Designated Representative, The Atkinson) stepped away from working with the Trust due to time constraints and work commitments. The Board thanks them all for their hard work and service during their time with The Atkinson Development Trust.

2.3. Governance

During 2023- 24, the following Trustees were appointed to the Board:

- Alice Clark appointed: June 2023
- Dom Potter appointed: June 2023
- Gemma Grady appointed: July 2023

The following Trustees and Representatives stepped down:

- Emma Harrison (non-trustee, but as Designated Representative, The Atkinson) ceased: December 2023
- Jenny Cope (Museum Futures Trainee & Trustee) ceased: November 2023
- Margaret Jolley: ceased: November 2023
- Helen Binbaum ceased: December 2023
- Marie Davies ceased: July 2023

The Trustees hold meetings every 4-6 weeks to discuss ideas and make decisions.

Day-to-day running of the Trust is delegated to the Administrator, with strategic steer from The Chair and all financial transactions are overseen by the Treasurer.

2.4. Management

It is the Trustees' duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity might be exposed, and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

We have one employee - a paid, part-time freelance Administrator. The Administrator has no access to the bank accounts or authority for authorising any payments.

Our Data Manager controls access to all data covered by GDPR.

3. Overview of Activities in 2023/24

3.1. Charitable Activities

During 2023/24, the Trust's primary focus was upon The Wellbeing Choir and Subsidised Tickets for Underrepresented Groups. The Trust also donated funds to the following projects:

Southport's first ukulele lending library - £580

The Trust provided £580 to launch Southport's first ukulele lending library. Ukuleles are available to loan in soprano, concert or tenor size (small, medium or large) from Southport Library in the same way that you borrow a book - all you need is a Sefton library card.

The Atkinson and Southport Library are working in collaboration with The Ukulele Project Northwest and Ukulele Buddies to allow our adult Library Members to gain access to music and connect with the local community across Sefton.

Each loan will come with an introduction guide to give you information on how to play your Ukulele, song sheets and lots of information on where you can buy a Ukulele, find a teacher, or a local 'strum-along' / open mic session or group.

In addition, the Trust also provided funds to launch some free teaching sessions available from Southport library with expert tutor Karine Woodward.

The Northwest Ukulele Project's mission is to use the Ukulele as a tool for building communities, confidence, combating loneliness and promoting wellbeing. Ukulele Buddies are a friendly and encouraging group, performing at festivals, events, care homes and open mics around the Southport region.

'Paper My Wishes' exhibition - £4,300

The Trust provided £4,300 for a community engagement project as part of Suhail Shaikh's 'Paper My Wishes' exhibition.



Paper artist Suhail Shaikh transforms the simple sheet of paper into multidimensional artworks. His work reflects the ideas, thoughts and reactions that arise from his perception of the evolving world around him. This unique exhibition allowed those who attended to explore the figurative, the abstract and to step into a space where the artist allows his dreams to become reality as he 'papers his wishes'.

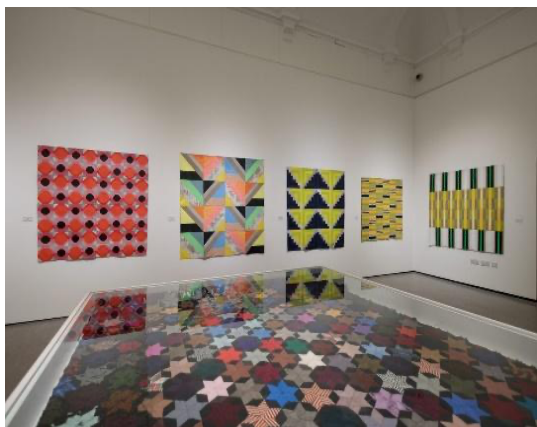
Central to Suhail's exhibition is a paper sculpture of the central section of a Lancaster Bomber. The work has been painstakingly put together to tell the story of WW2's Bomber Command and to remember those that gave themselves for our freedom. We want to stop the memory of them from fading. The sculpture is covered in copies of ephemera, donated by veterans, their families and those who wished to assist in the acknowledgement of the sacrifice of so many. The documents help to tell this story in the words and pictures of those who were there.

55,573 young men died flying with Bomber Command during World War Two; that's more than those who serve in the entire Royal Air Force today. They came to serve from all over the world, not just from Great Britain but also Canada, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, in total over 62 Nations – most of them still in their late teens.

Bomber Command suffered the highest losses of any unit during WWII yet have struggled for recognition. Every member of Bomber Command aircrew was a volunteer. They were tasked with flying 30 missions, but the survival rate was 3 weeks. The average age at time of death was 23.

'Quilt | Grid | Pattern' - £1,000

The Trust provided £1,000 to fund quilting workshops which ran alongside Kevin Laycock and Christopher Harris's Quilt | Grid | Pattern exhibition.



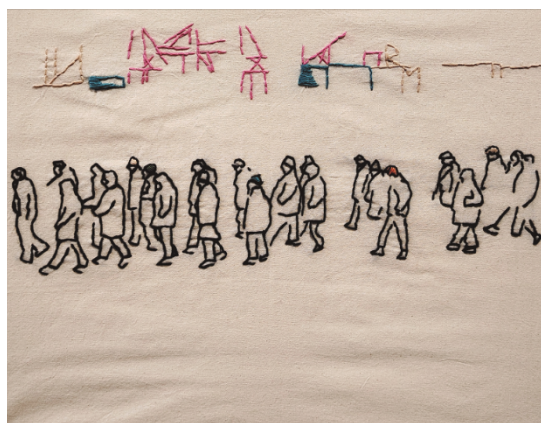
The artists reinterpret historic quilt making through abstract painting and mixed media artworks. The exhibition also showcases examples of British 19th century quilt making and the artists' responses to the patterns and structures contained within them. Gawthorpe Textiles Collection provided the touchstone for Harris and Laycock's latest work. Housed at the National Trust's Gawthorpe Hall, the collection includes over 11,000 items of textile history.

Our thanks are due to curator Rachel Midgley for her help in selecting and preparing work from the Gawthorpe Textile Collection for display.

Sefton at 50 - £300

On April 1st 2024 the Borough of Sefton officially turned 50 years old. Spanning an incredible 22 miles of jaw dropping coastline and playing host to some of the UK's most caring, kind-hearted and hard-working communities, Sefton is a Borough for everyone. Throughout Sefton's 50th birthday we will be celebrating the places and people which make our borough truly amazing.

We received £2,000 from Sefton MBC and the Trust allocated £300. More details here: [**Sefton at 50**](#)



New Exhibition – The Liverpool Dockers' Dispute
Tapestry

This tapestry was created by community volunteers from Sefton and funded by Heritage Lottery and The Atkinson as part of the "Sefton is 50" celebrations.

Adopt a Teddy - £2,100

Adopt A Teddy has now launched after much planning and work by Atkinson staff and volunteers, and the bears are now proudly displayed on the first-floor landing of The Atkinson. The Trust released £2100 to support the project and its launch. Funds raised from this project will feed back into the Trust.

Adoption packs include a letter from your teddy, a certificate, pin badge, post card and a bookmark. As a special thank you, Adopters have their names included in the Atkinson's Museum display.

The Atkinson's teddy collection was donated to The Botanic Gardens Museum in 1985 by a Mrs Pearce who lived in Southport. The teddies lived in the Botanic Gardens Museum until 2012 when they moved to The Atkinson. The Atkinson's teddy collection is a very important historical record of toys that were popular in the 20th century.



Social Inclusion Tickets

The Atkinson was delighted to be able to host its Christmas pantomime again in December 2023.

Previously the Trust, on the guidance of The Atkinson, had focused its subsidised tickets scheme on local primary schools. However, in 2022/23 capacity limitations meant that it wasn't possible to accommodate school parties. As a result, when The Atkinson was approached by a member of social services to request free tickets for 'Looked After Children and their carers', the Trust made the decision to reallocate some of the funding to provide these tickets for free to referred families.



This change in beneficiary led to a broader discussion, after which it was decided in October 2022 that 'Free Tickets for Schools' would become 'Social Inclusion Tickets', which broadened out the categories that could be funded by the residue of £3,230.50.

In 2023, the Trust released £1,128 for free social inclusion tickets for targeted groups in and around Southport.

3.2. Acquisitions and Restorations

There have been no acquisitions or restorations during this year that required Trust support.

3.3. Fundraising

Funds from 2023/24 came equally from cash and donations via The Atkinson's ticketing system (£5,065.11) and through Memberships (£5,121.00).

Income from contactless donations continues to be disappointing. Different locations have been tried and a wrap for the stand has been added for better visibility, but donations continue to be poor. A planned display stand intended to further draw attraction to contactless donations has proved difficult to implement.

The Project Team process has worked well in managing projects to a point at which they can be approved by the Board, but fundraising to cover the project cost has been unsuccessful. Fortunately, we have been able to support a significant number of projects from our own funds and it is hoped that an extension to the Membership scheme and sponsorships will allow the level of funding to grow.

The Board has approved the engagement of a freelance fundraiser. It will be an engagement of just 3 or 4 days in order to identify appropriate grant sources. Members of the Board will complete the grant applications.

Unrestricted Fund Allocation

Social Inclusion Tickets: £1,769.50, bringing the available support to **£5,000**.

Kevin Laycock Quilts: **£1,000** to fund workshops in the art of Quilting.

Suhail Shaik Retrospective: **£4,300** to fund the collection of stories about people from Sefton communities who flew in Lancaster bombers during WWII, and to then take those stories back into the community via schools, care homes etc.

Sefton Open: £1,200 for workshops to teach local people the basic skills of creating art.
Ukulele Group: £1,300 to purchase Ukuleles and provide Ukulele lessons at The Atkinson.

Total Unrestricted Allocation: - £12,800

Restricted Fund Allocation

Sefton at 50: TADT donated £300, and we received a grant of £2,000, giving a total of £2,300 to produce a tapestry telling the story of the dock workers strike, and to promote the story throughout Sefton.

Phillip Connard Exhibition: A £3,000 grant in support of a forthcoming exhibition.

Total Restricted Allocation: - £5,300

3.4. Awareness-Raising Activities

Membership was promoted via The Atkinson's digital marketing channels, including social media, e-newsletter, website plus in-house digital screens. When print could be re-introduced, A5 leaflets were produced and placed in key pick-up points throughout the building.

The Trust also agreed to put together an information board to be placed on the ground floor of The Atkinson between the cafe and the library. This board will enable the Trust to have a permanent space to promote itself and encourage support from visitors. The Marketing and PR subgroup led on this project, and it should be in place during the next financial year.

4. Financial Review

4.1. Situation at year end

- The total incoming resources for the year amounted to £13,776.87. The total expenditure in the year amounted to £11,229.70.
- Cash funds last year end: £37,145.41.
- Cash funds this year end: £39,692.58.

4.2. Reserves Policy

In 2016, the Trustees agreed a policy of holding reserves of unrestricted funds of a minimum of £10,000. The Trust holds reserves in order that it can continue to achieve its objectives should there be a reduction in incoming resources, such as experienced during the pandemic. However, continuing careful management has meant that we haven't had to use any of the reserve.

Reserves in this context mean funds that are freely available for the Trust's general purposes after all commitments have been met. As of 31 March 2024, the Trust had remaining unrestricted funds (after reserves) of £14,055.27.

We have provisions of £15,637.31 in place to cover previously planned activities and have a reserve of £10,000. The remaining £14,055.27 is not a large sum but is expected to grow with a full programme of activities at The Atkinson. It is expected that income from Memberships will continue to grow as people engage with The Atkinson and as new levels of Membership, corporate Memberships and Sponsorships are introduced.

4.3. Vat Validation

In line with our responsibilities as a charitable body, all payees have been checked to confirm that, where applicable, they are properly registered for VAT.


Thank you...

We would like to take this opportunity to thank The Vincent Hotel and Southport Town Hall for hosting our board meetings when The Atkinson has been unable to accommodate the Trust on certain dates due to events or closure.

5. Declaration

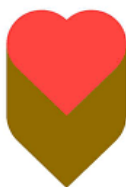
The Trustees declare that they approve the Trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of The Atkinson Development Trust's Trustees:

Signature: 

Name: Alice Clark, Chair of The Atkinson Development Trust

Date: Friday 24th January 2025



THE ATKINSON DEVELOPMENT TRUST

Income & Expenditure Account

As at: **31/03/2024**

INCOME

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Individual Giving	0.00	0.00	0.00
Membership	5,121.00	0.00	5,121.00
Donations - Restricted	0.00	0.00	0.00
Donations - Unrestricted	5,065.11	0.00	5,065.11
Grants - Restricted	0.00	2,300.00	2,300.00
Grants - Unrestricted	0.00	0.00	0.00
Seat Sponsorship	0.00	0.00	0.00
Gift Aid	928.14	0.00	928.14
Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00	0.00
Interest	362.62	0.00	362.62

Total Receipts

11,476.87 2,300.00 13,776.87

EXPENDITURE

Projects - Restricted	0.00	2,700.00	2,700.00
Projects - Unrestricted	4,987.18	0.00	4,987.18
Administration Costs	2,363.53	0.00	2,363.53
Contactless Donation Fees	180.00	0.00	180.00
Seat Sponsorship	0.00	0.00	0.00
Membership Scheme Costs	866.99	0.00	866.99
Charity Donation	0.00	0.00	0.00
Miscellaneous	132.00	0.00	132.00

Total Payments

8,529.70 2,700.00 11,229.70

Surplus/(Deficit) of Receipts over Payments

2,947.17 (400.00) 2,547.17

Cash Funds Last Year End	33,745.41	3,400.00	37,145.41
Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year	2,947.17	(400.00)	2,547.17
Cash Funds This Year End	36,692.58	3,000.00	39,692.58

Outstanding Commitments

Sefton at 50 Project	0.00	0.00	0.00
Social Inclusion Tickets 2022/23 (inc Elderly)	3,872.00	0.00	3,872.00
Marketing	1,011.03	0.00	1,011.03
Subscription to Matterport 2022	134.28	0.00	134.28
Adopt an Object	400.00	0.00	400.00
Kevin Laycock Quilts	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
Suhail Shaik - Retrospective	4,300.00	0.00	4,300.00
Philip Connard - Eternal Summer	0.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
Sefton Open 2024	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00
Ukulele Group	720.00	0.00	720.00
Reserved for Talks	0.00	0.00	0.00
Minimum funds to remain in Trust Accounts	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00

Total Commitments 22,637.31 3,000.00 25,637.31

Funds remaining after commitments

14,055.27 0.00 14,055.27

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Cash Funds This Year End **39,692.58**

Accruals

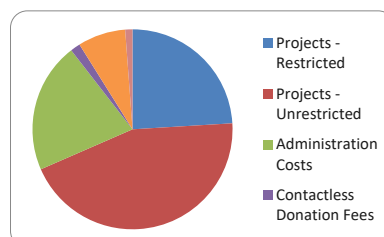
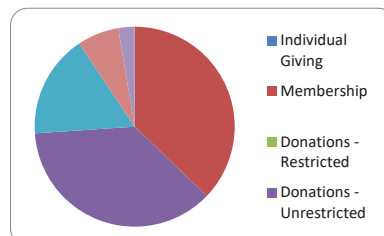
Monetary Assets:

Coop Current Account	7778.81
Coop Deposit Account	3193.77
	39,692.58

Diff

Pending Payment

0.00



Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of The Atkinson Development Trust For the year ended 31st March 2024

I report on the accounts of The Atkinson Development Trust ('the charity') for the year ended 31st March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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



Ian Wright FCA
Community Accountant
Sefton Council for Voluntary Service
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