



where
words
work

Mythstories
museum of myth and fable

**The Guildhall
Frankwell Quay
Shrewsbury
SY3 8HQ**

Charity Reg. No. 1161594

**Annual Report
Year ended 31st March 2024**



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1. Our Mission

Mythstories works with the spoken word; on-line and in outreach projects.

We encourage our users to be storytellers themselves, passing on oral heritage and keeping it alive.

2. Status of the Charity

Mythstories is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation governed by a standard 'Foundation' constitution. The original Charity was created by a Deed of Trust in 2001 and merged with the CIO in 2015.

Mythstories began as a website in June 1998, before opening as a physical museum in February 1999. During 2022/3 most of the museum artefacts were dispersed. Mythstories continues to operate as an on-line museum with outreach projects.

3. Governance and Management

Contact c/o Mr. S. Poole, Fullersmoor Cottage, Smithy Lane, Brown Knowl, Broxon, Cheshire, CH3 9JY info@mythstories.com

The maximum number of Trustees that can serve is 7.

During the year six Trustees held office:

Jacob Williams (second term – ends 15th May 2024)

Zara Bannu (second term – ends 31st August 2026)

Philip Jefferies (second term – ends 31st August 2026)

Simon Poole (second term – ends 31st August 2026)

Jennifer Watson (second term – ends 9th February 2027)

Joseph White (second term – ends 9th February 2027)

Trustees may serve a maximum of three consecutive terms.

The Trustees cover the following skill areas: cultural and community education, diversity, health psychology and resilience, legal expertise, verbal arts practice. Some were former young storytellers, some have current experience of academic life as teachers, lecturers and researchers.

No in-person formal meetings took place during the year. Trustees held formal meetings on-line and maintained contact via a WhatsApp group. Key policy documents and governance information, all contracts and current project information together with daily ledger and management accounts are maintained on cloud storage to which all Trustees have access.

Three Trustees and a key volunteer have access to the on-line bank account, with payments being reviewed and authorised monthly.

Ongoing and routine work continues to be delegated to two key volunteers.

4. Objectives

The primary focus of **Mythstories** is educational; preserving and disseminating traditional tales. It does this by:

A Maintaining an extensive website, free at the point of use, with traditional tales and a gallery of the objects previously held in the museum. It is a resource of tried and tested ideas for using stories and storytelling artefacts in formal and informal educational settings.

B. Initiating outreach projects in the Shropshire/Mid-Wales borders area, which focus on the region's oral heritage.

C. Working with other organisations to promote storytelling in the United Kingdom.

D. Exploring the educational uses of storytelling, as a gateway to literacy and to develop 'soft' life-skills.

The Trustees and management keep in mind the **Charity Commission's** guidance on public benefit when designing and delivering activities that flow from this objective.

5. Achievements and Performance

Telling our Stories: This project's final report evidenced the positive impact of this 'triple coded' approach in education, but concluded that more work needed to be done on the practicability of the approach within today's schools strictures. Both the report and a short documentary film are available on line and both were emailed to the teams at the newly re-

organised **Museums Development Service** as well as schools and academy trusts within the areas of the pilot project.

The project storyteller, Dawn Powell, continues to work with a small group of Year 5 pupils at one of the schools, **Mount Pleasant Primary in Shrewsbury**, as they refresh and redisplay their mini-museum.



During the year we successfully applied to **Arts Council England** for a grant to help progress both the exploratory work with schools and Mythstories' on-line presence. This **Imaginal** project will see two different storytellers deliver CPD for staff of both pilot schools, suggesting starting points for the use of the artefacts. It also enables Mythstories to participate in the **Arts UK / Bloomberg Philanthropies 'Connects' project** by engaging a freelance app developer. This programme will develop apps. for museum users and the developer will produce an app which highlights aspects of the website, bringing to the fore sections on environmental links and videos made by and of young people telling traditional tales.

During the year volunteers completed the 'Museum' section of the website, ensuring there is a complete record of the collection of physical artefacts that have now been dispersed.

And Mythstories was pleased to learn that the Flying Donkeys Screen was displayed at the Get A Word in Edgeways festival in Much Wenlock in October 2023, while the Edric & Godda storyscape, owned by the Clee Hills Trust, was used by a storyteller at the Shrewsbury Folk Festival in August 2023 and at Bishop's Castle Arts Festival in February 2024.



From October through to December Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery featured the painting “The Disappearing City” in their exhibition about Viriconium, Wroxeter Roman City.

After year end we were contacted by the University of Chester who told us they had arranged to vacate their Shrewsbury campus at The Guildhall at the end of the 2023/24 academic year.



As part of that arrangement they had agreed to transfer ownership of the Gilgamesh tablets and paintings to Shropshire Council so they may remain on display in the courtyard and building.



We are grateful to Shropshire Council, who have agreed Mythstories can maintain a postal address at The Guildhall.

6. Staff and Volunteers

Mythstories had no employees during the year. Routine work was undertaken by two key volunteers.

A former young storyteller has joined the volunteer team to run Mythstories' Instagram account, bringing a fresh vision and focus on the exhibits.

Mythstories has engaged a freelance trainee project manager to run the Imaginal project, liaising with app. developer, the schools and the two professional storytellers delivering the CPD. The trainee project manager is an experienced team manager in an unrelated discipline and is being mentored in her work with artists by the Key volunteers.

In addition to the Trustees, a further 10 volunteers were involved during the year.

7. Financial Review

Income

Mythstories has no guaranteed regular funding and during the year benefitted from in-kind support as well as volunteer time.

Sales revenue through the **ArtUK** shop generated a small net profit and a decision was made to continue the partnership for a further 12 months.

The first instalment of the **Imaginal** project grant of £4,410 from **Arts Council England Lottery** funding was received during the year. This project benefits greatly from the in-kind support provided by **Bloomberg Philanthropies** and **ArtUK** as well as Mythstories' own Key volunteers.

Expenditure

Mythstories has minimum overheads. Outside of project costs, the major costs in the year were accountancy, on-line hosting fees and insurance.

Reserves

Unrestricted reserves at year end are sufficient to cover foreseeable running costs in 2024/25 and this will provide a useful buffer as Mythstories continues to transition to its new operating method.

8. Future Plans

Mythstories will pro-actively seek funding to follow up the research project, using the learning to develop digital resources. We are working on this in association with RECAP (Research into Education Creativity and Arts Practise) who have generously agreed to be the research partner and fundholder for future work in this area.


The Mythstories app is due to launch on the Bloomberg Connects site in July 2024. We will actively promote and monitor its use in schools and other educational settings.

The Charity is currently in discussions with a funder regarding the delivery a small project with **Shropshire Supports Refugees** which will introduce these new families to the countryside and oral history of the County.

Approved by the Board


Signed: 

Date: ...29.06.2024.....

Signed: 

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2024

PJ. 03.09.2024


Joe White
13/09/2024

MYTHSTORIES - CHARITY

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31st MARCH 2024

	2024	2023
Fixed Assets		
Current Assets		
Stock		
Bank and cash	4453	2790
Debtors	12	
	<u>4465</u>	<u>2790</u>
Liabilities		
Creditors		
Accruals	500	250
	<u>500</u>	<u>250</u>
Net Current Assets	<u>3965</u>	<u>2540</u>
Net Assets	<u><u>3965</u></u>	<u><u>2540</u></u>
Funds		
Unrestricted	181	731
Restricted	3784	1810
Total Funds	<u><u>3965</u></u>	<u><u>2540</u></u>



PJ. 03.09.2024



Joe White
13/09/2024

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Mythstories

Charity Number 1161594

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31st March 2024

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 and that an independent examination is needed.

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

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- 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 trustees 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 has 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 130 of the Charities Act 2011; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

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.

John Higson
Bank Accounts
Oak Ridge, Horderley
Craven Arms
Shropshire
SY7 8HW



Date: 16/09/2024