



**The Millennium Embroidery Group Sunbury-on-Thames CIO**

**Report and Financial Statements**

**For the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

**The Millennium Embroidery Group Sunbury-on-Thames CIO****Report****For the Year Ended 31 March 2025****CONTENTS**

Trustees' Report	3 – 10
Independent Examiner's Report	11
Income & Expense Statement	Appendix A
Balance Sheet	Appendix A

## **The Millennium Embroidery Group Sunbury-on-Thames**

The trustees present their report along with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on Appendix page 3 and comply with the charity's governing document, applicable law and the requirements of the statement of Recommended Practice 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities'.

### **Constitution and Objects**

The Millennium Embroidery Group Sunbury-on-Thames was constituted under a trust deed dated 7 February 2001 and became a registered charity on 14 February 2001. It was dissolved during 2024/25.

On 10 June 2015, The Millennium Embroidery Group became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

**The Charity Objects** are to advance the education of the public with regard to the archaeology, history, geography, wildlife, development and daily life of Sunbury-on-Thames.

### **Organisation**

The trustees who have served during the year and since the year end (except as mentioned thereon) are set out on page 11. Trustees are appointed by the Board of Trustees.

### **Reserves Policy**

The trustees administer the charity's reserve policy which is to build up sufficient funds to pay for the embroidery centre's continued operation and future development of the Gallery & project.

## **MAIN ACTIVITIES and ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE YEAR**

### **• Trustees**

The Board of trustees met 3 times during the year to agree future policy, monitor the group's activities and approve the workings of the Operations Committee. There are currently 7 trustees.

### **• Operations Committee**

The committee held frequent management discussions throughout the year and implemented measures to enable the Gallery to return to a more normal way of operating as the year progressed.

### **• The Building and Attendance**

The total number visiting the gallery space during the year was 10,372. Of these, 3,099 (or 29.9%) were recorded as new being visitors. Talks were given to 15 visiting Groups alongside ad hoc talks to visitors. An estimated total of 40,000 people visited the building as a whole during the year. It was noted that recorded visitors to the Gallery space were down on last year (11,549). Early 2025 was particular wet and the Gallery is somewhat weather dependent for visitors, however the Trustees will watch this trend.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

- **The Diana Springall Collection**

In 2018, The Millennium Embroidery Group were able to secure for the future the widely acclaimed Diana Springall Collection, a unique and nationally important collection of British Embroidery and Textile Art, spanning seven decades. It is the only British collection with the unique distinction of covering embroidery as an art form. The collection comprises over 250 pieces, together with accompanying paper sketches.

Diana Springall is one of Britain's best known textile artists. Her sixty-year career in textiles includes appointments as a panel lecturer at the Victoria and Albert Museum, and chair of both the Embroiderers' Guild and the Society of Designer Craftsmen. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and a Member of The Worshipful Company of Broderers. Her work can be found in many private and public collections.

Diana is heavily involved with embroidery within both education and museum collections. She has been instrumental in promoting embroidery in the Fine Art world, and has been a teacher and mentor to a significant proportion of today's great artists working in stitch, including Alice Kettle.

The Trustees proposed that an archive and study centre be provided as part of the Gallery expansion to conserve, store and make available the collection for research and study, with pieces being exhibited in the Gallery on a continuing basis as well as being made available for outside loan.

The integration of the Diana Springall Collection would set us on the path to create a 'National Centre for Embroidery' in Sunbury, offering a valuable resource and study centre, close to London and to world-leading educational institutions, such as the Royal School of Needlework at Hampton Court.

- **The New Embroidery Centre**

With over 40,000 visitors a year, the gallery has had a pressing need for space for a number years and had extended its lease footprint in 2014 to allow for future expansion. This fitted with the acquisition of the Diana Springall Collection and plans were developed to transform the Gallery into a two-level exhibition and workshop space, each with distinct areas, enhancing the visitor experience. The new building will provide visitors with the space we presently lack. A new entrance, accessed directly from the carpark, will provide a strong identity for the Gallery separate from the Walled Garden & Sunbury Park.

Planning consent was granted and a programme of fundraising to raise £2.25m began in late 2019. However, this was just before the Covid pandemic struck, which unfortunately frustrated our efforts for the first two and a half years. We resumed our fundraising in the summer of 2022, and although we were fortunate in navigating the pandemic with our resources intact, we found ourselves in a rather different funding landscape, with many organisations seeking survival funding, and with inflation beginning to take hold. Prices, particularly in the building industry,

started to rise considerably, which resulted in re-adjusting our target to £3.25m.

- Our community fundraising Initiative has been extremely effective in engaging the support of a large number of the local community.

With new fundraising capacity at board level in 2025 and beyond we will be approaching a pipeline of major funders to meet our capital redevelopment needs alongside our community fundraising.

- **The Community Fundraising Initiative – Third Year**

The community strand of our fundraising saw a further fundraising day taking place in June 2024 at Monksbridge, a large local riverside property owned by long-term supporters of the gallery. This saw another successful day with nearly 2000 visitors, and during which we raised £21,000.

This was the last such event as a part of this programme it was another great result which has seen almost £62,000 raised over the past two years. It must also be noted with thanks, the huge number of people giving their time in creating these events. Each one involves the generosity of over 100 people, and takes months of planning, publicity and organisation.

- **Embroidery as a Means of Storytelling - Arts Council England**

An application was made to Arts Council England for funding assistance to run a series of exhibitions and events in 2025 reflecting Embroidery as a Means of Storytelling, and marking the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary since the completion of the Sunbury Millennium Embroidery in 2000.

In late 2024 we were fortunate to receive a grant of just over £26,000 towards this programme, which included for a project manager to help plan and coordinate the celebrations. The programme ran from March through June 2025, culminating in a 'Festival Weekend'.

Events included multiple stitched flowers crafted by local groups including the Afghan Women's Group and CAMEO Day Centres. Kenyngton Manor Primary School participated in a poetry project inspired by poet, Jan Noble, and Manor Mead School students drew inspiration from The Millennium Embroidery. During the Festival Weekend there were free guided nature walks in the Walled Garden and Sunbury Park, as well as free embroidery and flower making workshops and several theatrical events in the Garden for younger people following the theme of discovery in nature.

## **PUBLIC BENEFIT**

The Embroidery Gallery is located in an award-winning walled garden. Both the garden and the building are well-visited and convey a great sense of calm and wellbeing.

We ran 7 exhibitions during the course of the year and had 39 educational workshops. We had several school visits.

Entry to the building is free, as is access to the permanent embroidery display and all exhibitions. We had a number of talks to visiting groups

and mounted a full programme of exhibitions. The building was open to the public six days a week for a total of 300 days over the year.

The permanent embroidery display is at the heart of the project and embodies all the charity's objects. Members of the project team guide visitors through this display and the history and subject matter of the embroidery. Visitors to the Gallery cover all age groups and sections of the community.

During the summer months, the local authority arranges weekly music concerts in the Walled Garden on Sunday afternoons. During the year 13 such concerts were held in the garden. Depending on the weather, these can attract audiences of 200+ people. Due to its location, the Gallery benefits from additional revenues from Café sales during these events while providing much needed rest room facilities for visitors. The Gallery is a member of the community toilet scheme run by the local authority.

- **Access**

The building welcomes and provides for people with disabilities. In normal years we receive regular visits from groups with special needs as well as from visitors with sight impairment and physical disablement. A wheelchair is available to visitors. Audio guides are also available on request as well as the written transcripts of these, together with a Braille transcript of both our visitor leaflet and our descriptive booklet on how the embroidery was created.

The tactile guide to the embroidery enhances the visitor experience to the gallery. The display system, which cantilevers from the wall below the embroidery, allows for wheelchair access to the various panels and carries titles in relief lettering together with their Braille equivalents. A tactile map of the Walled Garden is also available.

- **EXHIBITION and EVENTS**

There were 7 exhibitions held during the year, 6 of which were community based.

- **Balance in Nature – 2 Graduates - Joe Shevalen & Susie Garner**

The exhibition explored the delicate balance between mental health and wellbeing. Joe Shevalen's hand-forged jewellery and rock sculptures represented the interplay of creation, healing, and growth in the face of life's challenges.

Susie Garner, a silversmith, drew her inspiration from nature's balance and the countryside, seeing plants as an essential interwoven textile that sustains life. Despite their differing styles, the exhibition's theme of balance invited visitors to reflect on equilibrium in mental health and the harmonious beauty of nature.

The exhibition was part of our programme to afford recent graduates the opportunity of exhibiting their work in a gallery setting.

- **Earth Threads - British Tapestry Group**

This was a touring exhibition of contemporary woven tapestries. It was the sixth such exhibition celebrating the vibrant and original tapestries from weavers of all levels of experience.

The theme Earth Threads was chosen to be both broad and inspiring. The natural world is a source of inspiration to be celebrated, but it is also challenged by climate change, pollution and the loss of biodiversity. Each weaver interpreted the theme in their own way. A number of weaving demonstrations took place during the course of the exhibition.

- **The Hidden Histories of Women – Alison Baxter**

In this exhibition Alison Baxter honoured the often underestimated and hidden histories of grandmothers. Using textiles and fragments of history she translated them into miniature vessels that encapsulate their profound significance with themes of security and belonging and cross-generational bonds.

Alison ran a workshop inviting participants to stitch a memory panel remembering their grandmothers.

- **Palms, Petals and Pads – Lucy T Smith – Botanical Artist**

Lucy T Smith is an author and teacher at the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew producing botanical illustrations in pen, ink and watercolour. As well as illustrating, she leads the teaching of the botanical illustration programme at Kew.

Displayed in the Gallery were some of Lucy's recent illustrations of the giant Victoria water lilies found in South America. These are the largest water lilies in the world, and the specimens at Kew had not been illustrated since the 19th Century Kew artist Walter Hood Fitch recorded them in 1851. Lucy T Smith's new watercolour drawings formed the basis of this exhibition.

Lucy held workshops on drawing and painting plants, and also a talk on Botanical Illustration.

- **Kate Wells - embroiderer**

Kate Wells is an established embroiderer and teacher and draws much of her inspiration from her studio setting on the outskirts of Sheffield, close to the moors and dales of the Peak District. Her embroidery transcends traditional media, incorporating thread, needle, textures, and softer surfaces using silk, cotton fabrics, and metallic threads. Drawing has always anchored her creative process seamlessly connecting her paper arts and embroidery.

As a member of the '62 Group', an Artist led Co-operative, Kate has exhibited in various locations around the world with pieces of her work in the Museum of Art in Kyoto, Japan and the Diana Springall Collection.

- **The Poetry of Stitch – Selected Pieces from the Diana Springall Collection**

This exhibition led into the Celebratory Community Exhibition, 'Embroidery as a Means of Storytelling', which celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the completion of the Sunbury Millennium Embroidery. This exhibition was generously funded by Arts Council England, Spelthorne Borough Council and Surrey County Council – Your Councillor Community Fund.

- **WORKSHOPS and DEMONSTRATIONS**

We ran 39 educational classes during the year. These included classes in embroidery, box making, willow weaving and calligraphy, arm knitting and meditation. Five of the classes were in collaboration with CAMEO Day Centres for small groups of individuals with dementia.

There were 7 weekend demonstrations of tapestry weaving as part of the exhibition of the British Tapestry.

- **MEMBERS of THE SUNBURY EMBROIDERY**

The Members of The Sunbury Embroidery was established January 2018. Members benefits include advance notification and priority bookings and a discount on all purchases and ticketed talks. They also receive a loyalty card for use in the Gallery Café. Monies raised help to support our community outreach programme.

- **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers support the project in all its functions, keeping everything running smoothly and supporting staff in the Gallery, the Café and the Office. Some volunteers offer their time for part of a day and others for longer periods. Volunteers help in various ways, such as with picture framing, photography, and the printing of graphic material.

One example of the latter is the Sunbury Gallery Beading Group made up of 6-8 volunteers. They continue to meet in the Gallery every Tuesday morning and create intricate beadwork, including jewellery and other items. In recent years the merchandising of their work has had more prominence resulting in an uplift of sales. All proceeds are donated to the Gallery.

We gained new volunteers during the course of the year who replaced those who left. This maintained a fairly steady complement of around 45 regular volunteers.

The invaluable support of volunteers has helped to enable the project to be entirely self-sustaining since it was established.

## **OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

The Gallery hosts quarterly meetings of the Friends of Sunbury Park (FOSP), a local voluntary group liaising with the local authority on the



management of the parkland in the village. In collaboration with FOSP the Gallery team have designed a series of five booklets describing the Flora and Fauna of Sunbury Parks and open spaces. All titles are available in the gallery and in local outlets at modest cost.

The gallery also hosts meetings of the Lower Sunbury Residents Association (LOSRA) once a month, whose purpose, as a voluntary association, is to optimise and enhance the quality of life for Lower Sunbury residents. The Embroidery Group is collaborating with LOSRA in producing a revised edition of '*The Sunbury Trail*' booklet – a walking tour of the village, highlighting notable buildings and aspects of the history of the village.

Our connections with both FOSP and LOSRA has led us to be able to offer a range of booklets in the Gallery produced by those organisations and supporting our educational objectives.

A meeting of Thames Sailability took place in the Gallery this year. Thames Sailability provides accessible boating experience for people with reduced mobility, wheelchair users, and those with special educational needs.

- **LOCAL SUPPORT**

The building's activities continue to enhance its community role. It has strong local support as well as attracting many visitors from a wider area. It is a well-established meeting place and a significant part of community life in the village.

We entered the third year our community fundraising initiative and received a number of individual donations.

- **THE GALLERY CAFÉ**

The Café remains very much the vibrant hub of the building and a valued community meeting place and destination. The revenue earned by the Café helps the entire project to remain self-supporting.

Since the start of the year, we have partnered with a local charity – Surplus to Supper – which collects and distributes surplus food from local food retailers. This has, in part, offset ongoing ingredient cost increases for the Café while supporting a local charity for which we make a monthly donation of £50.

In June we increased menu prices by 5% across the board in order to cover salary, energy and ingredient cost increases.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

During the year, we had on average 5 permanent part-time employees (including a cleaner) and up to 8 occasional part-timers who mainly worked weekends or provided weekday cover. One long-term permanent employee was still on maternity leave for the first quarter of the year, restarting at the beginning of July 2024.

## **GALLERY OPERATION and APPRAISAL**

The Project again faced financial challenges throughout the year with many operating cost adjustments, the most significant of which was a further increase in the national minimum wage rate of 9.8% which added 8.4% or c. £10,000 to the salary bill. In addition, Café input costs also increased as did energy costs following the ending of a fixed tariff on our electricity supply contract in September 2024. A number of replacement and maintenance issues were also addressed during the year.

A partial cost saving to mitigate salary costs has been in utilizing volunteer input where possible. The trustees are aware of this and looking as to how this can be minimised in the future. We have a committed team of staff and volunteers who continue to make the Gallery both a friendly place to visit and a popular and valued resource for the local community.

Also, during the year it was evident that the demands and intrusions of running the day-to-day operations of the gallery were overshadowing the time available in addressing more strategic matters, particularly with regard to the Gallery fundraising programme. In early 2025 a professional fundraiser, Jenny Starr, joined the board of Trustees to reinvigorate and restructure our fundraising programme.

We were able to offer a complete range of exhibitions and other activities during the year and we continued to advance the educational and community role of the project. The charity's 'objects' continue to be met and exceeded.

Approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by

Date: 31 January 2026

The Sunbury Embroidery Gallery  
The Walled Garden  
Thames Street  
Sunbury on Thames TW16 6A



Trustee

### **Trustees who have served during the year ended 31 March 2025:**

- Robert Shaw
- Nick Tilt            Treasurer
- Paul Watts
- Simon Wheatley
- Barbara Robertson
- Karen Nicol
- Jean Norman - assumes duties of Minutes Secretary but is not a Trustee.

## **The Millennium Embroidery Group Sunbury-on-Thames**

### **Independent examiner's report to the trustees of the Millennium Embroidery Group Sunbury-on-Thames**

I report on the accounts for the Trust for the year ended 31 March 2025 which are set out in Appendix A, pages 1 to 4.

#### **Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Honorary Auditor**

As described on page 3 the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act)) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts (under section 43(3)(a) of the 1993 Act):
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 43(7)(b) of the 1993 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 Commissioners. 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 I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

#### **Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the 1993 Act: and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act
- have not been met: or
- to which in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Robert Thorne, FCCA  
The Annex  
143-145 Stanwell Road  
Ashford,  
Middlesex, TW15 3QN

Dated: 31 January 2026

Date: 10/04/2025  
Time: 20:07:59

**The Millennium Embroidery Group**  
**Transactional Profit & Loss**

Page: 1

**Tran Date From:** 01/04/2024  
**Tran Date To:** 31/03/2025  
**Tran No. From:** 1  
**Tran No. To:** 99,999,999

**Dept From:** 0  
**Dept To:** 999  
**Start of Year:** 1

**Chart of Accounts:**

Default Layout of Accounts

**Year to Date**

**Sales**

Donations	2,473.65	
Fund Generation - Cafe	191,948.57	
Fund Generation - Gallery	21,421.41	
Charitable Activities	20,997.83	
Investment Income	1,614.53	
Other Income	200.00	
Rent Income Received	500.00	
		239,155.99

**Purchases**

Costs of Equipping the Gallery/Cafe	1,898.07	
Cost of Charitable Activities	0.00	
		1,898.07

**Direct Expenses**

Stock/Ingredients for the Cafe	45,099.97	
Cost of Sales for the Gallery	3,588.66	
Cost of Fund Generation - Fund Raising	6,762.92	
		55,451.55
<b>Gross Profit/(Loss):</b>		181,806.37

**Overheads**

Support Costs - Rent and Rates	2,815.03	
Support Costs - Heat, Light and Power	7,850.67	
Support Costs - Travelling Expenses	35.36	
Support Costs - Printing and Stationery	3,906.26	
Support Costs - Equipment Hire and Rental	435.99	
Support Costs - Maintenance	4,181.51	
Support Costs - General Expenses	3,831.75	
Management & Admin - Bank Charges and	2,794.30	
Management & Admin - Gross Wages	130,563.09	
Management & Admin - Professional Fees	14,660.96	
Suspense & Mispostings	1,760.60	
		172,835.52
<b>Net Profit/(Loss):</b>		8,970.85

Approved by:



..... Treasurer Trustee

31 January 2026