



# SOUNDCAFE LEICESTER

## ANNUAL REPORT 2024 – 2025 FINAL

Registered Charity No. 1162987

November 2025



*SoundCafe Leicester is a unique and diverse family, built on trust, support, care & compassion for one another.*

## **1. Introduction - Chair of Trustees Report**

The report last year identified several important matters on which this report will provide an update.

The financial environment continues to be difficult but, in these circumstances, the financial performance was reasonable this year. We were very sad to hear of the death of David Peake; he had been suffering from ill health for some time despite which he gave our director Rachel Griffiths excellent support in relation to the significant work involved in bid funding. Both Rachel and our treasurer (Lisa Parkes) are to be thanked for all the excellent work they have done in this area.

Changes were made this year in the way we deliver our services. As the numbers attending football have significantly diminished, we stopped weekly football with the focus being on fun play sessions and one-off events like the Football Festival held in May this year. We also changed when we hold the café and choir sessions so that these are now both held at St Mary de Castro on a Monday in term time. This change has been very successful with enthusiastic support from both the guests and the volunteers.

The choir had very successful performances in March (together with Semper Singers), at the Ingeus offices in July and December, as part of the 10-year celebration in October, and for the Christmas celebration in December. We are very grateful to Emma Trounson for her outstanding leadership of the choir and to Andrew Green for being her accompanist.

Safeguarding and a Risk Register continue to be regular items on Trustee Board agendas. As in previous years, various difficult issues have been well handled by our team with the assistance of the safeguarding specialists employed by the Leicester diocese.

We were delighted that Tony Leighton agreed to become our Chair of Trustees, which allows Alan Fletcher to take up the role of Secretarial Trustee. It was also excellent that two of our volunteers became trustees and we welcomed Andrew Scott and Martin Furniss on the trustee board.

In the report last year, it was noted that "we were very pleased to be nominated by Jonathan Kerry (CEO of Leicester Diocese) for a Kings Award for Voluntary Service."

The nomination involved a rigorous assessment process with our Director and Trustee Treasurer led by two of the deputy lieutenants (Diana Brooks and John Aldridge). In order for the lieutenancy to recommend SoundCafé for this award to the National Assessment Committee, it was necessary for Diana and John to be satisfied that all aspects of the charity's governance were of a high standard. As part of this process, we were delighted to welcome both Diana and John to a SoundCafé session to meet with our volunteers and guests. They were extremely impressed with all that is done in relation to governance and, when they attended a SoundCafé session, they came away with a very clear understanding of what SoundCafé means to our guests. As a result of this, the lieutenancy enthusiastically recommended SoundCafé for a Kings Award for Voluntary Service. We were absolutely delighted to be informed in November that we had received this extremely prestigious award.

Looking ahead, we hope to expand our reach by ensuring those who can benefit from our services are able to access us by knowing who and where we are.

It is vital that we access secure funding for our core costs so that we can have a higher degree of certainty to be able to deliver our services.

We are committed to working with both existing partners and developing new ones in order to embrace ideas and explore opportunities. Such partnerships are particularly possible with organisations who are a part of the Leicester Homelessness Charter network.

We will continue to support our guests to 'find their voice' through singing and creative arts and writing. The SoundCafé Choir (consisting of our guests and volunteers) is our biggest 'shop window' and we will continue to organise our own concerts and also perform jointly with other local community choirs.

We are aware that there are a number of people who have been volunteers with us in the past and together with our current volunteers we aim to encourage a network of lifelong advocates for the services that SCL provides for those who are vulnerably housed and socially isolated.

*Alan Fletcher, Chair of Trustees (March – Dec 2024)*

*Rev'd Tony Leighton Chair of Trustees (Jan 25 onwards)*



## 2. Executive Overview

2024/25 marked some key milestones for SoundCafe (SCL), the first being September 2024 with the introduction of a new service model of delivery, followed by the celebration of ten years as a charity in October 2024.



SCL would not be able to continue without the support of its Trustees, Volunteers, Patrons, grant & foundation organisations, Leicester Diocese, friends and donors. The 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary provided the opportunity to reflect on the journey that SCL has been on.



Partnership, has always been at the very heart of what SoundCafe delivers and we have been fortunate with our partnership working with:

- Leicester Samaritans
- Ingeus
- Leicestershire Cares.

Whilst we looked back on the last ten years and reflected on what has been achieved, we also now look forward to what the future may hold and ensuring we are here for the next ten years. Funding remains our biggest challenge, like so many other charities and we have had to make some difficult decisions on the way to ensure that we are still here today.

Creative café and Choir are now combined onto one afternoon delivered at St. Mary de Castro Church, Leicester and as a charity we are privileged to call St Mary de Castro our home and have all been welcomed by the community there. SoundCafe is built on a family ethos recognising that for many guests SCL is their only family.



In last year's report I shared the importance of volunteering and it playing such a vital role in supporting charities like SoundCafe.



We were delighted that this was recognised with SoundCafe being awarded the Kings Award for Volunteering in the King's birthday honours list in November 2024. This is the highest award a local voluntary group can receive in the UK and is equivalent to an MBE.

*'It is a great privilege to be able to contribute, in a small way, to enabling Guests to express their creativity. I feel passionately that the Arts (and Football) should be for everyone, not just for an elite few. Everyone should have a chance, if they wish, to write, draw, make things, sing - and experience the enjoyment of expression and creation.'* **Volunteer SCL**





Christmas 2024 was kindly supported by Leicestershire cares with their Winter warm bags and donations from other supporters.



We also welcomed back Drums4Fun at the end of March 2025 for a wonderful uplifting afternoon of drumming enjoyed equally by guests and volunteers alike.



*Rachel Griffiths, Director.*

### 3. Strategic & Operational Highlights

#### 3.1. Football



In May 2024 SCL hosted another successful football tournament with 8 teams across the county coming together in pursuit of the Fairplay Cup.

The first homeless and wellbeing football tournament was hosted by SCL in July 2022 at St Margaret's Pastures Sports Centre. This has now been established as an annual event, bringing together homeless charities in Leicester and other community and business teams from across the East Midlands.



In September 2024 SCL moved from weekly sessions to monthly Fun Friendly Football. Numbers committed to a weekly session had been in decline over the preceding months and it was no longer viable to continue with this model.

Leicester City in the Community continued with weekly sessions in the city which players could access.

The introduction of the fun play sessions gave guests of SCL and neighbouring community-based teams the chance to come together and play friendly matches and socialise over lunch, which was provided for both teams.

*Maria O'Brien, Service Co-ordinator*



### 3.2. Choir

It's been a particularly busy and exciting year for the SoundCafe Choir! The Summer term had an 'Around the World in Song' theme and saw the choir singing at Ingeus and at our summer concert at St Mary de Castro. We performed in three and four part harmony with all the different continents represented in song.



We performed some SoundCafe choir favourites at the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations in October.



For the Christmas concert, we sang a mix of choir only pieces and Christmas carols and songs for the audience to join in with. We also performed again at Ingeus for their Christmas Party.



In the Spring Term, we prepared songs along the theme of 'Together' which we performed in a Joint Concert at St Mary de Castro with Semper Singers. The choir sang songs on their own and four joint items with both choirs combined. The massed choir went down especially well with the audience who couldn't believe we'd got the two choirs singing together so harmoniously in such a short space of time.

They are looking forward to their Summer Term project singing Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.

The SoundCafe choir have once again grown in confidence and ability - the guests focus and work hard, supported by our volunteers. I'd like to thank Andrew Green, our accompanist, for giving up his time to practice alongside his commitment to rehearsals and performances, he is really such an asset to the SoundCafe choir. Also, to the percussion section who enhance our sound and help us keep in time. I am so proud of all the progress everyone has achieved over the course of the year and especially of all the wonderful performances we have given. I am grateful for all the support of the SoundCafe staff, trustees and volunteers who enable the smooth running of the choir.

*Emma Trounson, SoundCafé Choir Lead*



## 4. Keeping Everyone safe – Safeguarding & Pastoral Care

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone involved in the charity to protect the health and wellbeing of our guests who are recognised as vulnerable adults. Safeguarding is especially important due to the increased vulnerability of the guests we support, many of whom face a number of risks including abuse, exploitation, neglect, mental health challenges, and substance misuse.

### Key Principles

- **Prevention:** Creating a safe environment where individuals are respected and protected.
- **Protection:** Identifying those at risk and taking appropriate action to protect them.
- **Empowerment:** Supporting individuals to make their own informed choices.
- **Proportionality:** Responding to safeguarding concerns in a timely, appropriate, and sensitive manner.
- **Partnership:** Working with other agencies, to ensure appropriate support and protection.
- **Accountability:** Ensuring staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities and have undertaken the relevant training.

### What This Means in Practice

- All staff and volunteers must undergo safeguarding training.
- Concerns about abuse, neglect, or exploitation must be reported immediately to the designated Trustee safeguarding lead or session lead.
- Clear policies and procedures must be followed to ensure the safety of our guests as vulnerable adults.
- Background DBS checks are required for all staff and volunteers.
- A culture of respect, dignity, and confidentiality must be maintained at all times.

Over the last year we have continued to work with the Leicester based Samaritans to offer direct Samaritan support at sessions.

*Sandie Sobieraj, Martin Furniss SoundCafé Trustee Safeguarding Leads*

## 5. Financial Summary

Our income in the financial year to 31 March 2025 was £46,055 (2024 - £39,853).

We are tremendously grateful to the Friends of SoundCafe Leicester; those who have donated through the Parish Giving Scheme; those organisations which have given us grants; and those organisations and individuals who have donated money.

- The Albert Hunt Trust;
- The George Ernest Ellis Foundation;
- The Florence Turner Trust;
- The Haramead Trust;
- The Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland community Foundation;
- The Ladbrokes Coral Trust;
- The Maud Elkington Charitable Trust;
- The Post Code Lottery;
- The Truemark Trust.

Our expenditure for the year was £37,571 (2024 - £60,024). The reduction in expenditure was in relation to wages and session costs as a result of the changes to our service delivery throughout the year. All costs were carefully managed, and some services were only delivered if costs could be met from available unrestricted funds.

Overall, the net result for the year was a surplus of £8,484 (2024 – deficit of £20,171). The funds carried over from the previous year, the total assets brought forward on 1 April 2024 were £32,299.

At the 31 March 2025 we hold total funds of £40,783, of which £11,112 is classified as restricted and £29,671 as restricted.

It has been another year of great change, but we remain extremely thankful to all those who have helped us to support many of the most vulnerable in our society.

*Lisa Parkes, Treasurer*

## 6. Financial Statements

### Statement of Financial Activities – Year ended 31 March 2025

Receipts	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund	Year End 31 March 2025 rounded to nearest £	Year End 31 March 2024 rounded to nearest £
Donations	5,864	-	5,864	10,956
Parish Giving Scheme	2,583	-	2,583	2,683
Friends of SoundCafe	240	-	240	340
Grants	20,535	15,257	35,792	23,959
SoundCafe Events & fund raising	1,488	-	1,488	1,792
Other - bank interest	88	-	88	123
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£ 30,798</b>	<b>£ 15,257</b>	<b>£ 46,055</b>	<b>£ 39,853</b>
Payments	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Fund	Year End 31 March 2025 rounded to nearest £	Year End 31 March 2024 rounded to nearest £
Manager Salary, NIC, Payroll	17,210	636	17,846	28,889
Service Co-Ordinator Salary, NIC, Payroll	2,628	4,714	7,342	11,221
Activity Co-ordinator Salary, NIC, Payroll	-	1,484	1,484	4,731
Professional fees and pension	884	10	894	998
Parking	94	200	294	490
Room Hire, Arts & Crafts, Refreshments	754	1,025	1,779	1,707
Choir	800	940	1,740	1,667
Football	-	2,492	2,492	2,897
SoundCafe Events	410	140	550	-
ICT, stationery & postage	479	7	486	520
Equipment	-	-	-	26
Insurance	549	-	549	583
Fundraising, Media	500	-	500	1,931
Sundries & Volunteers	747	808	1,555	1,064
Bank charges	60	-	60	101
Arts Council Project	-	-	-	3,200
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£ 25,115</b>	<b>£ 12,456</b>	<b>£ 37,571</b>	<b>£ 60,024</b>
<b>Net (expenditure)/income</b>	<b>£ 5,683</b>	<b>£ 2,801</b>	<b>£ 8,484</b>	<b>(£ 20,171)</b>



### Balance Sheet – as at 31 March 2025

Net Income/(expenditure)	Amount
Income 2024-2025	46,055
Less Expenditure 2024-2025	( 37,571)
Net deficit for the year 2024-2025	8,484
Funds brought forward at 1 April 2024	32,299
<b>Total Funds carried forward at 31 March 2025</b>	<b>£ 40,783</b>

Assets	Amount
CAF Bank Balance at 31 March 2025	40,266
Co-op Bank Balance at 31 March 2025	455
Petty Cash, held by Trustee at 31 March 2025	4
Petty Cash, held by Director at 31 March 2025	58
<b>Total Bank and Cash held at 31 March 2025</b>	<b>£ 40,783</b>

Details	Amount
Restricted Funds Brought Forward	8,071
Restricted Income received	15,257
Restricted Expenditure	( 12,456)
Transfer from Unrestricted Funds	240
<b>Restricted Funds at 31 March 2025</b>	<b>£ 11,112</b>

Details	Amount
Unrestricted Funds Brought Forward	24,228
Unrestricted Income received	30,798
Unrestricted Expenditure	( 25,115)
Transfer to Restricted Funds	( 240)
<b>Unrestricted Funds at 31 March 2025</b>	<b>£ 29,671</b>

Restricted Funds at 31 March 2025	11,112
Unrestricted Funds at 31 March 2025	29,671
<b>Total Funds at 31 March 2025</b>	<b>£ 40,783</b>

## 7. SCL Governance Framework

7.1. SoundCafe is governed through a Trustee Board, the members and roles are outlined below

Role	Scope of Role
<b>Chair</b> <a href="#">Alan Fletcher</a>  <a href="#">Appointed March 2021</a> <a href="#">Resigned as Chair Dec 2024</a>  <a href="#">Rev'd Tony Leighton</a> <a href="#">Appointed January 2025</a>	<p>Lead the Trustee Board in ensuring the effective performance of its' governance, ensuring there is an effective relationship between the Board and SCL staff, volunteers and stakeholders. Lead on the assessment of SCL's corporate and operational risks; and ensuring risk is appropriately assessed and mitigated where appropriate.</p> <p>Chair Trustee meetings so that the Board functions effectively and carries out its duties; and the finances of SCL are systematically accounted for, audited, independently examined and publicly available.</p>
<b>Trustee Secretariat</b> <b>Risk Management &amp; Legal</b>  <a href="#">Alan Fletcher</a>  <a href="#">January 2025</a>  <a href="#">Appointed as a Trustee March 2021</a>	<p>Ensuring the administrative affairs of SCL are conducted within legal requirements; Trustee Board meetings are properly organised and administratively serviced and the Board fulfils its administrative responsibilities and legal obligations.</p> <p>Deal with Trustee Board correspondence; keep a check on the progress of work as agreed by the Trustee Board.</p> <p>Lead on the assessment of SCL's corporate and operational risks; and ensure risk is appropriately assessed and mitigated where appropriate.</p> <p>Responsibility for the Charity's compliance and submission of documents to the Charity Commission.</p>
<b>Vice Chair</b> <a href="#">Alan Fletcher</a>	<p>Deputising for the Chair at meetings and events and acting as a representative of SCL on other bodies.</p>
<b>Treasurer</b> <a href="#">Lisa Parkes</a>	<p>Overseeing SCL's financial reporting; planning and management; agreeing targets and evaluating performance against them. Exercise financial controls in order to ensure the financial stability of the</p>

Role	Scope of Role
Appointed September 2022	Charity and to scrutinize and challenge the trustees in planning, advising on financial matters, overseeing strategy on development matters.
Business Management Pete Miller  Appointed March 2019	Providing a business perspective to the board, networking with local businesses to encourage further support – both financial and practical. Promoting SCL's use of social media to actively engage with its public and the business community.
Pastoral/Safeguarding Sandie Sobieraj  Appointed March 2015	Lead on SCL's guest pastoral support, specifically addressing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An awareness and appreciation of guests needs</li> <li>• Supporting volunteers in their pastoral care of guests</li> <li>• Nurturing by empowering guests to seek assistance and achieve their potential</li> <li>• Ensuring the Trustee Board are aware of the key issues and how SCL can develop to address the needs of guests.</li> </ul> Trustee Board lead for Safeguarding across SCL. Member of the Operational Management Group.
Social Media Lucy Collins  Appointed January 2023 Resigned November 2024	Advising on the social media format and communications for the charity.
Operational Delivery Jenny Barrett  Appointed December 2023	Ensuring SCL meets the health & well-being needs of guests and appropriately measures the outcome of its services and projects. Advise on specific operational issues and policies that may affect SCL service delivery. Member of the Operational Management Group.
Safeguarding/ Bid Support Martin Furniss	Support SCL's safeguarding policies & procedures working in partnership with the current Trustee lead for safeguarding.



Role	Scope of Role
<p>Appointed November 2024</p>	<p>Ensuring the Trustee Board are kept up to date with any key reporting incidents and future action required.</p> <p>Work with the Director in the development of SCL's approach to bid writing and reviewing potential bids as appropriate.</p>
<p><b>Health &amp; Safety</b></p> <p>Andrew Scott</p> <p>Appointed November 2024</p>	<p>Responsibility for ensuring SCL adheres to appropriate health &amp; safety legislation; advise on specific safety and operational issues that may affect SCL sessions and performances/events. Ensure the Trustee Board are aware of any key risk issues and impact for SCL.</p> <p>Work with the Director to ensure the safe operational running of SCL sessions.</p>





# CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

## Independent examiner's report on the accounts

### Section A

### Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/  
members of**

Charity Name  
SoundCafe Leicester

**On accounts for the year  
ended**

31 March 2025

Charity no  
(if any)

1162987

**Set out on pages**

1 TO 15

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended ~~31/03/2025~~

**Responsibilities and  
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed 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 (other than that disclosed below \*) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Date:

3/11/25

Name:

SIMON WILSON

Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):

CIMA

Address:

GARDEN FLAT, 19A PELHAM CRESCENT  
NOTTINGHAM  
NG7 1AR.



Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

**Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.**