

AGM 2025



Trustees Report for 2024/25



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# Message from the Chair of Trustees



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Dear Member

The Winter Gardens Trust held its first AGM ten years ago in July 2015 and at that meeting, the Board of Trustees committed to issuing an annual report on activity to members. This is our fifth year of meeting in the lead up to the festive season and it gives me enormous pleasure to again extend an invitation to join us on the evening of Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December for a glass of wine and a mince pie.

We've had a relatively quiet year in 2025 despite bringing in over thirteen thousand pounds of funding. We've done this yet again through regular coffee mornings, raffles and events like our Christmas Makers Market and our annual trip out, which this year was to Wakefield, where we were hosted for a fantastic tour by Wakefield Civic Trust.

Again this year, our Christmas Fair event in the Horseshoe will already have happened on November 29<sup>th</sup> when we meet for our AGM. I do hope you'll support us on the day to look at this year's selection of locally made and often unique Christmas gifts. I often reflect on how lucky we are to have such a vibrant arts and creative scene in Blackpool and I'm always pleased that the Winter Gardens Trust can play a part in showcasing that local talent. Our own volunteer team will be there selling our Christmas cards and other merchandise, and whilst I know I say this every year, if you know someone who'd appreciate a membership for Christmas, you know where to go!

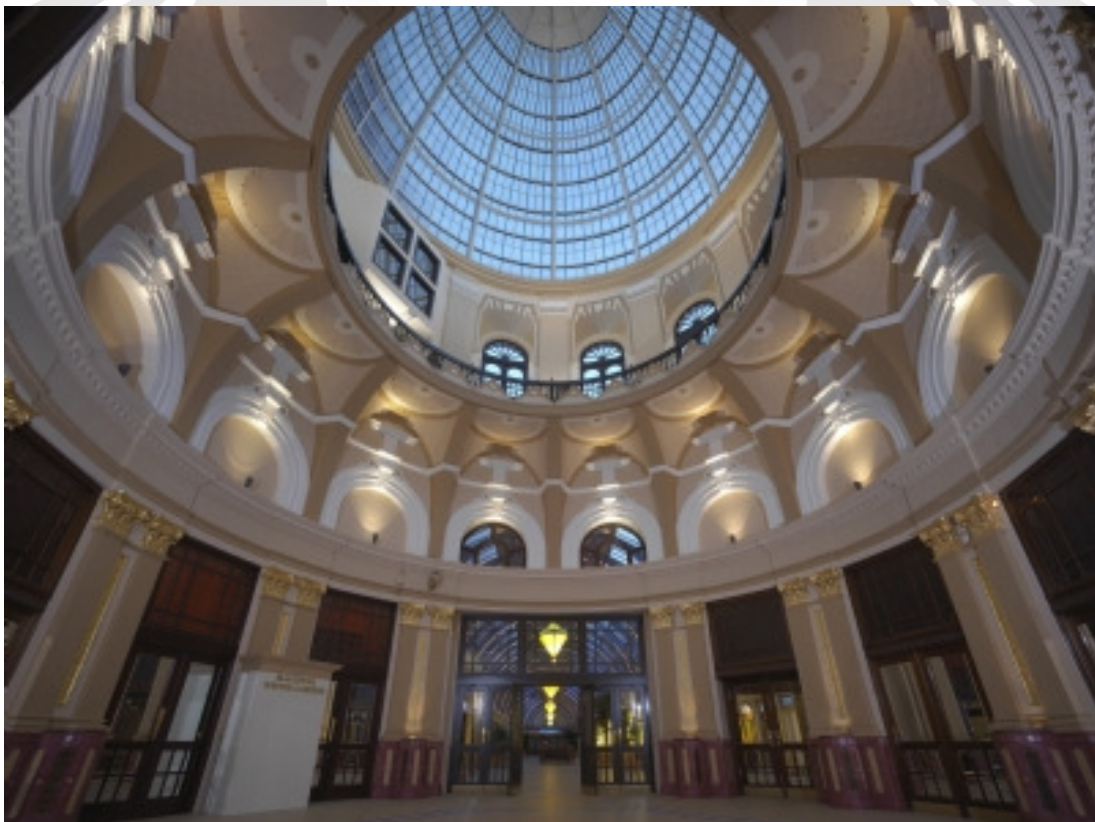
Speaking of our volunteers, I would just like to make you all aware – in case you'd missed all the fanfare back in September – that our remarkable Elaine Smith had a landmark birthday recently. I'm too much of a gentleman to say what that landmark was, but suffice to say, Elaine is a living example of how we can all go on to play an enormous part in our communities no matter what our age. Elaine has been an important player in Blackpool's civic and heritage life for almost as long as I can remember and the number of hats she's worn would put any regular Ascot lady to shame! Anyway, hats off to Elaine and our wonderful core of volunteers who strive tirelessly to raise funds and keep you all entertained.



I would like to close by yet again thanking you all for all your support over the last year, whether it is simply by subscribing and being a friend or by being one of our keen volunteers, helping out at events and with fundraising. I would also like to thank the staff at the Winter Gardens, particularly the remarkable team of managers who work so hard to support us and for whom it seems that nothing is too much trouble.

I look forward to seeing you all on the **3rd December** at 6pm for our AGM in the Baronial Hall at the Winter Gardens.

David Owen  
Chair of the Board of Trustees  
The Winter Gardens Trust





# Our Funds



**Our funds and what we do with them is important, and whilst it's not all about the money, we still need to bring money in to deliver and support activities within the Winter Gardens.**

Our income and expenditure report for the financial year 2024/2025 is given below and our Secretary will run through this and answer any questions at the AGM. In the interests of transparency, we'll also have a full transaction list available on the evening for anyone who would like to see the accounts in item by item detail!

## Winter Gardens Trust Income/Expenditure 2024/25

	In	Out
Carried Forward from 2023/24	<b>£ 18,513.00</b>	
Admin/Website	£ -	-£ 288.00
Stationery	£ -	-£ 13.98
Stamps	£ -	-£ 169.00
Events	£ 10,643.68	-£ 8,004.61
Merchandise	£ 350.08	
Sponsorship/Grants		-£ 7,000.00
Membership	£ 1,879.96	
Trustee Expenses	£ -	£ -
Acquisitions	£ -	£ -
Equipment	£ -	£ -
Donations	£ 910.00	
Debtors		

### Year Totals

<b>£ 32,296.72</b>	<b>-£15,475.59</b>
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### Available Balance

<b>£ 16,821.13</b>
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At the close of the financial year in March 2025, the Trust has available funding of £16,821.13. This is slightly down from last year, but yet again it should be remembered that some costs for activities in the current financial year (2025/26) appear in the previous year without the related income.



# Our Membership



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**Our membership is the most important part of who we are. Without their support our work would be much more difficult and whilst your subscription money is important, the involvement of our members is even more critical.**

Membership numbers continue to remain strong with our current membership standing at about 260 with a large number of renewals due at the AGM. Membership subs remain a core source of funding, with an income of £1879.96 in the 2024/25 year. This is down from last year, but this has been because of the shift to a single point in the year for renewals. We fully expect this to right itself from December onwards as we enter the new membership year.

Yet again, the Trustees are not recommending any increase to membership fees in the current year. However, as they did last year, the Trustees would also like to ask members to help us grow. Do you know someone who was a member but isn't anymore? Do you know others who might be interested and who you could encourage to join?

What about a year's subscription as a Christmas present? We'd be only too happy to provide cards in a lovely Christmas card with envelope for you to give friends and family.





# Our Events



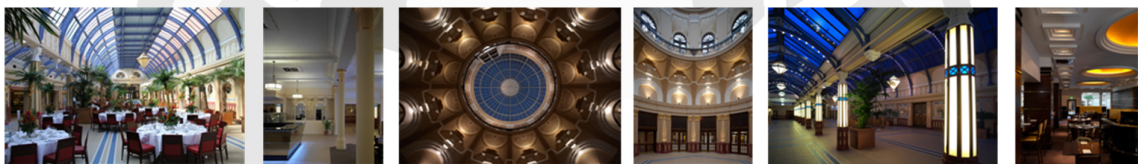
**Our events are important to us because they offer a way to raise money as well as an opportunity to get together as a group to celebrate what's special about the Winter Gardens.**

We have had another excellent year for income from events with the overall total after costs showing an income of **£2639.07**.

Our trip to Wakefield this summer allowed members of the Winter Gardens Trust to visit the Frank Matcham Theatre Royal as well as meet members of the Wakefield Civic Society for a tour around the city centre covering all the key heritage assets and highlighting recent improvements to the city. For our next tour, it has been suggested that we might revisit Morecambe in 2026 to look at the amazing progress they've made as a result of significant funding from Historic England and other partners. It would be good to keep up with our sister venue and support the incredible work of volunteers there.

Our coffee mornings remain the backbone of our events calendar and as these continue to grow and we're always looking for new speakers, so if you know of one, do get in touch! Again, we'd just like to say that we're immensely grateful to all of those who gave up their time to speak to us and who have made the coffee mornings such a success.

# Our Sponsorships & Acquisitions



**The way we support others in bringing the past to life is also important to us and we're always looking to fund and work with partners to achieve this.**

**Sponsorship/Grants** We made only two grants in the 2024/25 financial year and these were; the payment of the latest instalment of £5000 for the Empress Ballroom Chandeliers and the agreed £2000 to support the Blackpool Music Fund that we announced at the 2024 AGM.

**Acquisitions** We have had no acquisitions in the financial year 2024/25



# Our Programme 2024/25



**Our programme of events is changing all the time and our events below don't include the many shows and non – trust events held at the Winter Gardens every year.**

All our usual events will be back in 2026, St George's Day afternoon tea and our usual extensive programme of coffee mornings alongside future open days and hopefully a signature event for 2026.

As one of our Board members Garry Bignell has agreed to work with our webmaster to update content and stories, we're hoping 2026 will be the year our website comes alive, so as we move into next year, please feel free to check in at: <http://www.wintergardensblackpool.co.uk>

## Our Constitution & Board



**Our constitution was written and ratified when the Trust became a Charity in 2015, but like all such documents, it requires occasional amendments to keep up with the times!**

**Constitution** – There are no proposed changes to the constitution for consideration at this AGM.

**Board** – All current elected Trustees have indicated their willingness to re-stand as trustees so unless other nominations are received they are all willing to continue to serve until the next AGM.

After the last AGM the Board co-opted Mrs Linda Barrie to the Board. Many of you will know Linda as a regular volunteer at our events and she's proving a very useful addition. On this basis, the chair will be proposing Linda be elected to the Board formally at the AGM.



This will bring the Trust Board back up to its traditional 8 members but we are always willing to consider new members with special skills that can help us achieve our objectives, so if you do think you can bring that something extra, let us know as soon as possible.



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