

Charity number 1173072 (England and Wales)
and SC049523 (Scotland)



- Empowering people through writing -

RECEIPT AND PAYMENT ACCOUNTS

21st October 2020 to 20th October 2021

Barbara Sheen CGMA
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Arkbound Foundation

Report of the trustees

For the year 21st October 2020 - 20th October 2021

Structure, Governance and Management

Type of governing document: Constitution

How the charity is constituted: CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) - only voting members are charity trustees

Trustee selection method: Appointed through open, full board meeting decisions

Objects and activities

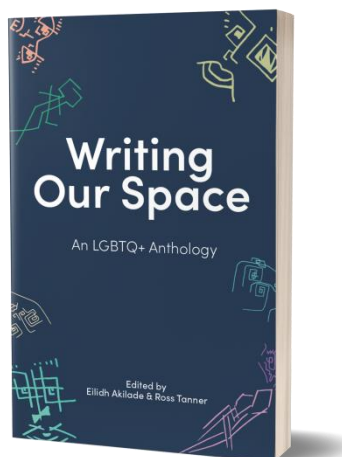
The charitable objects of the CIO are:-

a. TO PROMOTE SOCIAL INCLUSION for the public benefit by working with people across the UK of all age groups who are socially excluded on the grounds of disability, poverty, criminal background, ethnicity or any other characteristic, and to relieve the needs of these groups to assist them to integrate more effectively into society, particularly by: -

- i. Empowering these groups through workshops and events to convey their personal stories in a way that can be understood and appreciated by the wider community.
- ii. Providing mentoring whereby individuals from these groups can fairly access the means to publish their work for the wider community to read and to develop their writing skills in a manner that improves their wellbeing.
- iii. Providing a means by which these groups can convey their stories through books and the media at large, thereby helping to tackle stigma, misunderstanding and discrimination.
- iv. Engaging these groups in discussions regarding climate change and the environment and promoting good environmental practice and awareness of related issues

b. FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION: For the public benefit to promote learning for people of all age-groups from disadvantaged backgrounds through the continued development of their individual capabilities, competencies, skills and understanding in subjects of educational value.

How the charity implemented the objectives and the main activities undertaken for the public benefit over the last year(s):



- The charity is grassroots founded, with lived experience core team members, as well as equality and diversity led. It works directly with people from a range of disadvantaged and under-represented backgrounds, principally those who suffer social exclusion because of poverty, disability, ethnic and any other equality rights protected features, also those with refugee status, a conviction or criminal record, addictions, drug abuse, living in poverty or being long-term unemployed.

- We are actively involved in disability activism, providing ongoing peer support, proactive engagement, writing for wellbeing guidance, and advice leading towards a publication.

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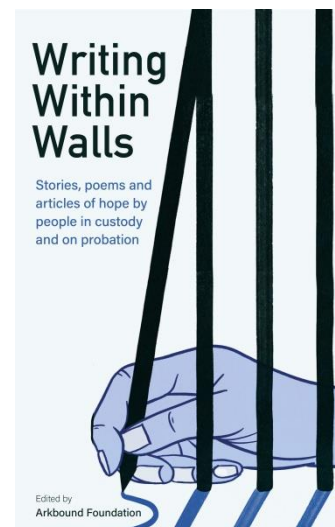
For the year 21st October 2020 - 20th October 2021

- We have trustees representing all equality main characteristics, including those identifying as LGBTQ+, who initiated ongoing online and writing involvement opportunities for the public, tackling stigma, and sharing experiences. 'Writing Our Space', a book that presents accounts of people within the LGBTQ+ community across the UK, was published in September 2021.
- Amongst other titles published, we supported a refugee and woman with experience of ethnic and gender discrimination to convey a powerful account of her experiences, 'Lullaby in the Desert'. In her words:-

"The Arkbound Foundation is an amazing team who provided me with lots of support, which was crucial as a first-time author new to the world of publishing and editing. The Arkbound foundation is building bridges and connecting people from different backgrounds to make the world a better place for everyone, supporting authors like me and giving voices to the voiceless." – Mojgan Azar

- We run on-going writing and publishing opportunities for prisoners and ex-offenders, as well as workshops and offer mentoring. We published Writing Within Walls, a collection of stories by prisoners on the theme "hope", in August 2021. The book was also made into an audio version later in the year: *our very first audio book*.
- Our mentoring scheme for the most marginalised people with experience of custody or probation, where we employed 3 lived experience mentors, has continued throughout the year – with currently 9 individual mentees enrolled, and several working towards publications.
- With financial support through National Lottery Scotland, we provided a mental health and wellbeing related mentoring scheme "Power of the Pen", for disadvantaged people and deprived communities: <https://arkbound.com/arkbound-foundation-awarded-national-lottery-funding/>
- Our landmark project in Scotland, **Bridging Literary Divides**, has progressed as planned: employing 6 writing mentors, each of whom is paired with an aspiring writer from a disadvantaged background. Already one of these writers has signed a publishing representation agreement with an established literary agent. In the words of one mentee:-

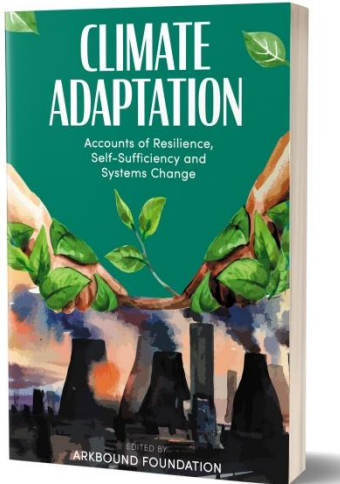
"When I first began this programme back in October I didn't realize that I would grow to love it. During the process I really learnt a lot and gained new skills which I now integrate into my writing. What also really helped is that I also have an amazing mentor who has always been very encouraging and is able to really 'get' my characters like me and also understands my writing." - Angela Bettoni



"The meetings with Jim are fantastic, he is really helping me to draw the story out and develop my writing." – Christina C

To find out more about this initiative, visit <https://bridgingdivides.scot/>

- Continued support and open access for people from all backgrounds to volunteer for the charity, alongside facilitating paid internships, saw the charity take on board a total of 73 people across the year. In the words of one volunteer:-



"Working at Arkbound has been instrumental in helping me discover where my interests lie. I am so fortunate to have found such an incredible opportunity that has allowed to develop new skills and make an effective contribution to a valuable charitable organization." - Davinia Fernandes

- Our work around climate change and the environment has been significant this year. We published two major titles, each receiving large amounts of national coverage and promotion:-
 - Great Adaptations by Dr Morgan Phillips
 - Climate Adaptation by Arkbound Foundation(multiple authors from around the world featured across the book)

"Working with Arkbound was an exceptionally engaging and rewarding time. Easy to approach, ready to help staff and volunteers make your work easy to publish books while you focus on core writing." – Dr Renuka Thakore, author in Climate Adaptation

"I am so glad I got to work with Arkbound publications. Having been an activist/environmentalist from the Global South hasn't been easy and especially when it came to telling our side of the struggle on how the climate crisis was affecting communities and wildlife in Kenya, so I was delighted when Emily reached out to me so I can tell my story, in my own words to the world. Emily and her team have been incredible with their support." – Fazeela Mubarak, author in Climate Adaptation

- These books are scheduled for two launch events, one at the Mitchell Library in Glasgow on 25th October, and the other at Waterstones Bristol on 9th November. An online event in September was also held, attracting 44 participants.
 - Extensive participation and cross-publicity has been seen as a result of these titles, with the second timed for the international climate summit in Glasgow (COP26) held at the end of October. As part of this work, we recorded interviews and made dedicated videos to raise awareness of climate change and the need for communities to prepare for the impacts.
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Report of the trustees

For the year 21st October 2020 - 20th October 2021

Governance

Over the last 12 months the charity's governance was stable, with meetings held at regular intervals throughout the year. Our previous vice-chair Mike Findlay got voted in as chair last year in November 2020, at a full board meeting. Our general board meetings take place every 2-3 months: we successfully switched to holding them via Zoom, in response to Covid-19. Important decisions are made by majority vote and every trustee can bring up agenda points. All meetings are properly recorded through minutes which get taken during the meetings, then circulated to all trustees a few days later, once they are written out and confirmed to be accurate.

We also advanced through regular trustee training opportunities, and every board member is made aware of the resources and regulations which are available through the CCEW gov.uk pages. Our policies get regularly updated and we have all essential ones in comprehensive forms, like safeguarding, data protection, complaints, conflicts of interests, expenses, volunteering, together with internal contacts, designated persons, as well as outside contacts for emergencies.

Achievements and performance

We are proud that the charity has continued its founding mission of empowering people from the most marginalised and under-represented backgrounds to make a positive difference – in their lives and others – through writing. The charity's underlying belief in the power of writing to dispel stereotypes, improve awareness of important issues and bring people together has been reaffirmed through the work and projects we have delivered throughout this period.

Our track record is also an example of working closely alongside people who suffer multiple disadvantages and under-representation, as well as being informed by lived experience of the same issues on a management level.

Other notable achievements across this period include:-

- Publishing our very first audio book, 'Writing Within Walls'. The process was more accessible than previously thought, thanks to the recruitment of a new member of staff familiar with audio book production and publishing. We have seen sales from the audio version commence from its launch, increasing on a weekly basis, and we plan to make additional audio versions of other books.
- Formal accreditation with the United Nations Environmental Programme. Only a handful of organisations in the UK have this status and it was gained after proving our pioneering efforts, principally around the COP26 project. The accreditation will strengthen our awareness of environmental issues and representation of communities in the UK who are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. It also enables early access to documentation and events undertaken by the UN, which we have begun to attend.



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- National and international coverage of multiple publications, with our highest levels of recorded book sales. Of particular highlight is 'Great Adaptations' and 'Climate Adaptation', both featured in The International Journal of Environmental Studies, The Big Issue, Nature, The Times Literary Supplement, The Ecologist, amongst many others. Pre-orders for both books exceeded 1000. For comparison, our highest selling previous publication totalled 300. We have great expectations for these two landmark titles on climate change.
- We were accepted onto the Charity Excellence framework (quality mark) and also gained both Disability Confident and Living Wage Employer marks. This was in recognition of our commitment to providing a fair, open and accessible workplace to disabled people, together with ensuring all employees receive a living wage.
- Thanks to a renewed outreach effort to networks, organisations and individuals, the charity achieved the highest level of yearly donations and corporate sponsorships in its history: £36,089. Through such efforts, we have developed a growing support base who can be relied upon in the years ahead to sustain the charity's work.

Overcoming challenges and obstacles

Although less than the previous year, impacts from COVID-19 caused a degree of disruption and income loss to the charity. This was mainly as a result of events having to be held online or with restrictions, causing lower attendance, engagement and book sales. It was also the case that many book stores – including independent venues that we relied upon in the past – were closed. As before, we dealt with this by holding online replacements and organising for additional health and safety protections for the physical events that could be held. To counteract the closure of stores, we put a lot of effort into online promotion, with extensive usage of social media.

At the beginning half of the year, our offices continued to be shut or with major restrictions, resulting in a continuance of staff having to work remotely. There were no major negative impacts from this, although it caused an increase in the length and frequency of emailing, with occasional delays in organising things. To counteract this, we endeavoured to hold regular meetings by Zoom.

An additional challenge came in the form of a budget deficit for the COP26 project. Through delivery of this project and liaising with other organisations, we found that access to funding for any kind of environmental project is extremely difficult – with the bulk of it being reserved for larger organisations or those who are specially invited to apply. At the same time, those funders within our core sphere of operations – social impact and cultural activities – often seemed to find it hard to see a connection with the environment and how it impacted people/communities (including climate change).

We did not expect this when planning the project and it resulted in having to draw upon unrestricted reserves. It also meant planned aspects had to be lessened – such as cutting the length of the (physical version) book to save print costs and reducing the level of advance royalties paid to authors. Regretfully, one was unhappy with these changes, making hostile communications with multiple staff and volunteers, but we were able to draw upon the support of our pro bono solicitors to resolve the situation.

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The publication of 8 titles and delivery of so many projects also represented an operational drain on our limited staff team, all of whom work part-time. Getting a balance between budgetary limitations and ability to deliver projects was sometimes a juggling act, requiring the intervention of trustees and volunteers. Going forward, we hope to create some full time positions, with potentially the role of a CEO to oversee operations and support all staff consistently. This will, however, be dependent on levels of income and/or additional funding.

Financial review

The Arkbound Foundation aims to keep at least three months running costs in reserves, so as to cover emergency or unexpected costs. We have managed to continue doing that throughout this period.

Increased promotion and outreach saw a growth in book sales, donations and corporate sponsorship: £8070 for the first and £36,089 for donations and sponsorships. This represents the highest levels in the charity's history, with further growth expected for the next year.

The principal source of income during this period was grants. This comprised £56,718. As a relatively new charity, the trustees nonetheless regarded the proportion of grant funding (at 63% of income) as a good sign, proving that there is strong future potential to move away from the unpredictability of grants and instead draw upon growing trading income.

The charity's principle expenditure was direct project delivery costs from book publications, workshop delivery and mentoring. The secondary expense was staff salaries, followed by office rent. As before, all these areas were kept at a very economical level, under the principle that internal operational costs must always come second to actually delivering projects that generate social impact.

Independent examiner

Ms Barbara Sheen was appointed as independent examiner for the charity in this period.

This report was approved by the trustees on 29th October 2021 and signed on their behalf by:

Mike Findlay

Mike Findlay, Chair of Trustees

Independent examiner's report

To the trustees of the Arkbound Foundation

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Arkbound Foundation ('the charity') for the year ended 20th October 2021, which are set out on pages 10 to 11.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the 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 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.

Barbara Sheen

Date: 28th October 2021

Barbara Sheen CGMA
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Arkbound Foundation

Receipts and payment account

For the year ended 20th October 2021

	12 months to 20/10/ 2021 Total £	Restated [Period in last accounts] Total £
Receipts		
Donations and corporate sponsorships	36,089	11,778
Grants	56,718	51,366
Revenue from book sales and publishing	16,500	3495
Support in kind	1038	5297
Subletting	0	630
Total receipts	110,345	72,566
Payments		
Book publication costs (all elements)	18,578	5295
Advertising and promotion	3341	0
Writing and journalism workshops	2870	695
Staff salaries	36,460	20,716
Volunteer and trustee expenses	1772	75
Mentoring network costs	4809	1015
Office rent	2243	1875
Insurance	150	0
Postage and stationery	1390	75
Website costs	465	180
Equipment and materials	1206	3,396
Environmental projects (incl. COP26 project)	7154	0
Small grants and prizes	1591	1500
Fundraising costs	9490	0
Total payments	91,669	41,982
Net receipts / (payments)		
Cash funds at 21st October 2020	30,584	30,584
Cash funds at 20th October 2021	51,268	

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Statement of assets and liabilities

As at 20th October 2021

	2021 £	Restated 2020 £
Cash funds	51,268	30,584
In bank and on hand		
Total cash funds	51,268	30,584
Cash funds		
Unrestricted	12,668	4534
Restricted	38,600	26,050

The above report was approved by the trustees on 29th of October 2021 and signed by:

Mike Findlay

Mike Findlay, Chair of Trustees