

THE TELLING

England & Wales · Charity number 1181802

Details

Other names	THE TELLING MUSIC
Status	Registered
Legal form	CIO
Registered	2019-01-30
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	168 Percy Road Twickenham TW2 6JF
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Activities

Objects: TO ADVANCE THE ARTS AND EDUCATION FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT, THROUGH THE PROMOTION, SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF MUSIC, IN PARTICULAR BY PRESENTING HISTORICALLY-AWARE MUSICAL PERFORMANCES, WORKSHOPS, TALKS AND RECORDINGS USING PERIOD INSTRUMENTS, OFTEN COLLABORATING WITH OTHER ART-FORMS INCLUDING THEATRE, FILM, DANCE AND PUPPETRY, TO REACH PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT USUALLY ATTRACTED TO CLASSICAL CONCERTS

Activities: The Telling advances the arts & education for public benefit by a) giving high quality concerts & performances all over the UK & forming residencies in areas where little early music takes place b) work with young people in schools & amateur singers & instrumentalists from a variety of walks of life, introducing them to new repertoire & enabling them to develop their musical skills.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services
- **What:** Education/training, Arts/culture/heritage/science
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Throughout England

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£201,932	£191,667	-	-
2024-03-31	£136,067	£143,930	-	-
2023-03-31	£109,116	£102,483	-	-
2022-03-31	£68,101	£61,125	-	-
2021-03-31	£40,582	£43,723	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Chung Hin Chloe Lam		2025-01-10
Elizabeth Rosemary Davies		2019-01-16
Joanne Nicola McIntosh		2019-01-16

THE TELLING

England & Wales - Charity number 1181802

Accounts

THE TELLING
(CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION)
REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

CHARITY COMMISSION REGISTRATION NO. 1181802

THE TELLING

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

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THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The Trustees present their report and financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (FRS 102) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's Constitution, the Charities Act 2011 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland published in October 2019.

Objectives and Activities

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charities Commission's general guidance on public benefit. This is borne out by deliveries of activities outlined in this report, which are in line with the main objectives of The Telling and the activities to deliver against those objectives.

The Telling aims to advance the arts and education for the public benefit. We do this through the promotion, support and encouragement of music and theatre by presenting performances, workshops, talks and recordings, often combining music and theatre and taking performances to places to reach people who do not usually access such performances.

We:

- a) give high quality performances, focusing on performances where music and theatre collide in interesting ways
- b) work with young people in schools and amateur performers, singers and instrumentalists from a variety of walks of life, enabling them to develop and improve their creative, dramatic and musical skills.

We perform across the UK and, alongside a series of engagements, run our programme of residencies, targeting places where there is little classical or early music touring which are currently Liverpool, Barrow Peninsula/South Cumbria, Lancaster, Manchester, Colchester, Folkestone, Conwy, Cardiff, Bedford and Wolverhampton.

We combine theatre, new writing, music (including early music, classical, world music, folk music and music-theatre) to reach people who are not usually attracted to classical concerts – but also to use music to heighten feeling, give insight to the drama, characters and/or plot or to cut against the plot in interesting ways.

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

We perform in churches, theatres, art centres, pubs, church halls, community centres, taking performance deep into the heart of communities. We often perform in and around audiences and use costume, stage lighting and candlelight.

We engage a pool of leading directors, actors, musicians, lighting designers, composers and costume makers. Our Artistic Director, Clare Norburn has devised a new genre where music and drama collide. Her concert/plays have attracted **4-star reviews** in *The Times* and *The Guardian* and performances at **Bridgewater Hall, St George's Bristol, St Martin-in-the-Fields and LSO St Lukes**. The stage director we work with, **Nicholas Renton** directed Andrew Davies' BAFTA nominated *Mrs Gaskell's Wives and Daughters* for BBC TV and episodes of *Lewis, Musketeers, Silent Witness* and *George Gently*.

We have been on **BBC Radio's In Tune, Woman's Hour and Saturday Live** and performed for promoters including **Beverley Early Music Festival, Music at Oxford, Buxton International Festival, Lake District Summer Music, Brighton Early Music Festival, Newbury Spring Festival, Little Missenden Festival and Keele Arts**. We have released three CDs – all on the **First Hand Records** label.

Achievements and Performance

This is the Trustees sixth report to the Charity Commission.

TOURING PERFORMANCES AND WORKSHOPS

Summary:

The Telling attempts to break new ground, where new writing by Artistic Director Clare Norburn and music collide. We tour high-quality, accessible and affordable productions: combining engagements by leading promoters with self-promotions in places that are often missed out on touring circuits, including building audiences and partnerships in Wolverhampton, South Cumbria, Conwy (North Wales), Bedford and Folkestone.

2024/25 saw us give 42 UK performances reaching over 3000 people and 4 workshops/outreach sessions including at **Beverley Early Music Festival, Newbury Spring Festival, Hallé St Peter's Manchester, Brighton Early Music Festival, Manchester Jewish Museum, Stratford Playhouse, Silsden Town Hall, Arena Theatre Wolverhampton, OSO Arts Centre Barnes, Portico Library Manchester and Stoke Newington Early Music Festival**. Alongside paid engagements, we are also unusual in the way that we fundraise to take performances to places which "miss out" in accessing touring circuits: so our tours are a mixed economy of guaranteed fees, box office splits and self-promotions, backed by reciprocal marketing partners on the ground. In 2024/25, we continued to fundraise and tour to our Residency places which otherwise miss out on accessing professional music and theatre touring. We also developed a new residency in Lancaster and built relationships with repeat venues **Silsden Town Hall** who offer us a guaranteed fee, and **OSO Arts Centre** in Barnes who operate a box office split and enabled our first week-long run.

Particular Achievements

In June 2024, The Telling won the prestigious **Audience Participation of the Year Award** organised by the **European Early Music organisation, REMA** for our *Songs and Stories* project in partnership with amateur **Sarah Atter and Wolverhampton Refugee and Migrant Centre** in January and February 2024. Artistic Director, Clare Norburn travelled to Stockholm to receive the award and was invited onto **BBC Radio 3's The Early Music** to talk about the win (our second time on the show in 2024, following an hour-long feature on our work in March).

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

In November 2024, The Telling toured our Charles Dickens show (written in 2023), *What the Dickens?*, which starred seven actor-musicians who all acted, sang, played instruments and danced – sometimes all at the same time! The show was the vehicle through which The Telling achieved its first week-long run, at OSO Arts Centre in Barnes, attracting three 4-star reviews and a 5-star review: “*a hauntingly brilliant exploration of one of literature’s greatest figures. It masterfully intertwines fiction and reality, giving voice to the women overshadowed by Dickens’ fame.*” – Pink Prince Theatre. Plus, the whole cast were invited on **BBC Radio 3’s *InTune*** to perform both music and dialogue excerpts from the show.



The Telling performing What the Dickens? – photo Robert Piwko

The **hallmark of our work** is our distinctive collision of music and drama. Our early programmes started with early music and drama, but we are increasingly expanding beyond that remit, whilst keeping our early music still in our repertory. The Telling’s programmes are written by Clare Norburn whose latter work takes inspiration from Brecht, often tearing down the fourth wall, and iconoclastic TV playwright, Dennis Potter, exploring the nexus between memory and the characters’ inner or fantasy lives, and harnessing music’s unique capacity to trigger memories and feelings. Several are political or provide commentary on current issues seen through the lens of the past. For example: celebrity culture and #MeToo are explored in *What the Dickens?* and *Into the Melting Pot* focuses on religious and cultural intolerance and the plight of refugees

“*Clare Norburn takes moments in history to make us understand the present more clearly*” Robin Soans, playwright

View a list of The Telling’s projects here: www.thetelling.co.uk/programmes

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Touring aims:

While we maintain a commitment to fundraise to take work to places which miss out (which means more expensive and higher risk self-promoted events), we will combine that funded work with paid engagements and box office split/shared risks to create a more sustainable model. In 2024/25, this included engagements at **Beverley Early Music Festival/NCEM**, **Newbury Spring Festival**, **Brighton Early Music Festival**, **Silsden Town Hall** (two performances) and multi-date runs at **OSO Arts Centre** in Barnes, and return visits and growing partnerships with **Arena theatre**, **Wolverhampton** and **St Edwards in Cardiff**.

The Telling's pioneering **Touring and Project fund is our key overarching programme**. Within this, our **Residency Programme** aims to build audiences by taking performances to places that "miss out". We aim to create **equal access for low-engaged communities** in areas of **economic disadvantage, where other performing arts organisations dare not tour**.

In the 2024/25 financial year, we grew audiences in the following places, which otherwise receive a limited touring or early music offer: **Manchester** (3 performances), **Liverpool** (2 performances), **Cardiff** (3 performances), **Bedford** (2 performances), **Colchester**, **Folkestone** (2 performances), **Conwy N Wales**, **Lancaster** (2 performances), **Wolverhampton** (2 performances) and **South Cumbria** (Ulverston).

We ran 5 touring projects which were:

1. ***Into the Melting Pot***: set in 1492 in a Spanish Christian/Muslim/Jewish community, a Jewish woman (played by Suzanne Ahmet (National Theatre, Chester Storyhouse)) is forced to leave. Her story is startlingly contemporary, with resonances to Windrush, Black Lives Matter & recent antisemitism, and is played out to a soundtrack of plaintive Sephardic songs & lively Cantigas which fuse medieval & Arabic instruments/styles, making early music accessible to a wider audience. **4 performances and 1 screening of the film adaption: May 2024**.
2. ***I, Spie***: the story of renaissance composer/lutenist John Dowland's (played by **Dominic Marsh** (Kneehigh Theatre)) brush with the Secret Service and how he manages to foil an Italian plot on the life of Queen Elizabeth I. **13 performances: June 2024**
3. ***What the Dickens?*** On his final Christmas Eve, Charles Dickens is "haunted" by the women he mistreated: his wife and mother of his ten children, Catherine Dickens and his secret young mistress, Ellen 'Nelly' Ternan, who force him to face his past, present and future. Can Dickens learn from them, repent - and be saved, as Scrooge was saved? **11 performances: November/December 2024**
4. ***The Telling Unchained including an at Christmas mini-series***: the Christmas edition of our popular alternative concert: a fun, relaxed and informal performance of early music mixed with folk, improvisation, jamming and plenty of audience participation – including in a pub, in Liverpool and at Portico Library in Manchester in December 2024 **3 performances: December 2024 plus for Walthamstow Music in the Village in July 2024 and Brighton Early Music Festival in October 2024**
5. ***Creating Carmen***: Prosper Merimée (Niall Ashdown (*Whose Line Is It Anyway? The Comedy Store Players, Improbable*)) has writers block when his leading character, Carmen (**Suzanne Ahmet**), turns up in his study, larger than life, with a band of musicians in tow and chaos in her wake... A collaboration project with CarmenCo. **10 performances: January/February 2025**.

Plus, we brought a one-off performance of our Lullaby Concert to Stoke Newington Festival in July 2024.

Into the Melting Pot, *Creating Carmen*, *I, Spie* and *What the Dickens?* were directed by **Nicholas Renton** (BAFTA-nominated *Mrs Gaskell's Wives and Daughters*, *Musketeers*, *A Room With A View*, *Lewis*, *Silent Witness*) and written by singer/playwright, **Clare Norburn**.

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025



The Telling performing Creating Carmen – photo Robert Piwko

LIVE WORKSHOPS: While on tour, we capitalise on bringing high-quality artists to excluded communities around the country by offering music workshops to local communities. During the year, we brought our *Songs and Stories* project, inspired by *Into the Melting Pot*, to Manchester Jewish Museum in April/May 2024, in collaboration with acclaimed musician/animateur Sarah Atter. The participants recorded their creations which are available online (www.thetelling.co.uk/mcr-songs) and a small exhibition was displayed at the Manchester performance of *Into the Melting Pot*.

In November 2024, 40 GCSE English students studying *A Christmas Carol* from Our Lady and St Chad Catholic Academy, Wolverhampton and 13 drama students from Moseley Park School, Wolverhampton attended the dress rehearsal of the show at Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton, followed by a Q&A with the playwright, Clare Norburn. We received the following feedback from the teacher at OLSC: *“It was such a valuable experience for the students. It sparked lots of discussion on the way back on the impact of Dickens’ life upon the text. It helped to bring this time period to life for the students.”*

Then in December, playwright Clare Norburn and animateur Sarah Atter delivered two interactive workshops at OLSC to a further 80 GCSE students studying *A Christmas Carol* (different students to those that attended the dress rehearsal), to explore the characters of the novel to a deeper level through a mix of drama and music. *“it brought [the characters] to life and it showed us how they would really act”* – student feedback

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

In addition, *What the Dickens?* was selected by EXTANT Theatre (who had partnered with Arena Theatre in Wolverhampton) to receive free support to make the show accessible to visually impaired audiences. During the rehearsal period, three of our artists (writer/singer Clare Norburn, actor/violinist Alex Knox and composer/keyboardist Steven Edis) received training from EXTANT Theatre's facilitators to present a Touch Tour and programme notes presentation ahead of the show. This means our team now has skills and experience that we can adapt to deliver future Touch Tours for visually impaired audiences.

In February 2025, CarmenCo (who we partnered with to perform *Creating Carmen*) brought their 'Pocket Opera' performance and workshop project to 45 pupils in Years 10, 11 and 13 at **Cardiff West Community High School**.

Key artistic team: Our creative team is led by Artistic Director **Clare Norburn** (playwright, producer and former soprano) who won the 2023 Colin Skipp Memorial Radio Playwriting Competition and was one of 7 writers, selected out of 400, for BBC/ACE-funded The Space's Pitch Perfect scheme to receive mentoring and be commissioned to develop a play with music for national BBC radio. Our regular acclaimed director **Nicholas Renton** cut his teeth in theatre, going on to direct at the RSC and then spent 30 years directing for the BBC and ITV, including being BAFTA-nominated for BBC TV's Mrs Gaskell's Wives and Daughters. Our lighting designer is **Natalie Rowland**. We work with a creative pool of:

- leading actors including **Alec Newman, Rachael Stirling, Danny Webb, Dominic Marsh, Clive Hayward, Karen Ascoe, Molly Lynch, Susan Tracy, John Sackville, Gerald Kyd, Suzanne Ahmet, Teresa Banham, Leila Mimmack** and **Niall Ashdown**
- acclaimed musicians including many who are early music specialists including **Emily Baines, Jean Kelly, Jamie Akers, Clemmie Franks, Heloise Bernard, Giles Lewin, Alison Kinder, Avital Raz** and **Maya Levy**.

Audience Feedback

We continued to receive moving feedback from workshop participants and the public about our work. This is just some audience feedback questionnaire responses we received:

Into the Melting Pot

"It was magnificent and the story is as relevant today as it was in Spain in 1492."

"Thank you so much for a deeply emotional, timely body of work. I was mesmerised by the singing and instruments, and by the beautifully told but chilling story of persecution. You put your hearts into this and connected with the audience."

"Thank you for the wonderful show at Otley Courthouse last night. It evoked memories of an evening concert in the Jewish Quarter of Girona some years ago. Such a rich legacy of wonderful music rooted in all the upheaval and conflict. Thank you!"

"We found it mesmerising, The audience was spellbound by the incredibly powerful performances that transported us back over centuries. Just fantastic. Thanks."

"Fascinating, beautiful and informative tales like this are what we need more of in the North, and please visit Yorkshire again soon."

I, Spie

"Husband, who isn't into early music, loved it"

"I had never enjoyed music earlier than 1600 but last night The Telling changed all that"

"so different to a normal concert"

"I came to the terrific performance of I, Spie in Folkestone and we spoke briefly. I just wanted to affirm that I'd love to help you with other [venue] suggestions. It's wonderful work you're doing - do put me on a mailing list!!"

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

"My partner and I came to see the performance of I, Spie last night in Folkestone. What a thrilling and special performance it was - great script, consummate acting and some wonderful renaissance music to embellish and inform the story."

"Beautiful music, exquisite singing, clever plot and acting excellent"

"Exquisite musical performance brought to life brought to life with its ingenious dramatisation, clever dialogue and a spontaneous nature"

"Perfect combination of early music, drama and harmony"



The Telling performing I, Spie – photo Robert Piwko

What the Dickens?

"Totally absorbed... loved the pacy storytelling and the historical accuracy"

"I really loved the show. It was imaginative and engaging. Brilliant idea which brought together Dickens life, his work and music of the time . Rare to get such originality and entertainment in one production . Excellent standard of acting and music . Thank you"

"Brilliant show. I loved the energy and the singing. Interesting take on Dickens, which I didn't know about before"

"Superb storyline and well-crafted script. An exceptional and gifted writer at work here."

"The combination of music and storytelling is unique and beautifully and skilfully executed."

"It was great fun and such a clever idea. It was executed so well and all involved seemed to be relishing it - infectiously so."

"Deserves to be on a much bigger stages and seen by many more people."

"Loved it. Brilliant in every way. Made me feel very pleased to have come and seen it. And impressed with all your talents!"

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

"We thought the script and the acting were excellent. The musical numbers were also enjoyable. The whole story was ingeniously put together and linked with Dickens's life."

"It was fabulous. I loved the interweaving of the book text with the story, the use of the live music that was an equal partner to the words. Such an outstanding performance with a small cast. I truly can't think of anything I disliked. Perfect for the season as well."

The Telling Unchained at Christmas

"Really enjoyed it. Great range of instruments and different music. Audience participation great fun and felt very informal. Confident playing and singing."

"I loved the skill of the performers, the beauty of the music and the engagement of players with audience."

"Loved all of it. Intimate and involving performance"

"Really loved it. Participation was so uplifting, made me feel happier. Loved the Spanish tunes especially."

"Engaging, enjoyable, enthusiasm shines through. Beautiful sound & interesting historically. Impressive performance - great fun."

"Absolutely lovely. Clare has a beautiful voice and the harpist was superb. The programme was so beautiful and interesting. It was an unexpected privilege being at Clare's last singing concert - thank you."

Creating Carmen

"The plot was so original. The standard of musicianship and acting was phenomenal."

"Inspired, enlightened and in awe of the incredibly talented cast, bringing to life a highly original work"

"Great performance. Very entertaining"

"Fabulous evening. Wonderful entertainment. Thank you."

"It was excellent – the music, singing, acting and also the venue – very intimate and atmospheric. Thoroughly enjoyed it"

Marketing and press coverage

In each of our residency locations we developed partnerships with venues and other arts organisations that helped us reach local audiences. We set up reciprocal marketing partnerships with local arts organisations at each of our tour locations, asking for their help in spreading the word and offering to return the favour.

We successfully use Facebook Ad campaigns; usually the highest percentage of audience members who fill in our feedback questionnaires say they discovered the event through Facebook. This in combination with reciprocal marketing with partners and a flyer distribution plan on the ground worked strongly together.

We also worked hard to secure local press coverage and secured **local BBC Radio** interviews with **BBC Merseyside** and **BBC Radio WM**. We mentioned under achievements that the entire cast of *What the Dickens?* was invited on **BBC Radio 3's In Tune** to perform both music and dialogue excerpts from the show.

★★★★ *"a playful patchwork of references from across the centuries ... sure-footed, entertaining theatre ... an engaging Christmas outing."* - The Reviews Hub (November 2024) on *What the Dickens?* at OSO Arts Centre, Barnes

SHARING OUR LEARNING WITH OTHER ENSEMBLES AND COMPANIES

Given The Telling has an interesting formula for developing residencies in areas where there is little or no early music touring, we share our learning (both successes and failures) so others can benefit from our learning and explore how to tour and develop residencies themselves. We have been working with The Mancunium Consort on a project in late 2025 helping them develop fundraising and budgeting skills.

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Financial Review

Our income continues to grow, from an average of £60-70k up to 2022/23, to £136k in 2023/24, and then in the 2024/25 year under review, we achieved total income of £201,932.

Our reserves as of 31st March 2025 were £13,491, although £17,783 of this is restricted funds received in advance of 2025/26 financial year towards projects in that period. This was offset by a small deficit of £7,518 on unrestricted funds at the year end. This deficit on unrestricted funds was subsequently eliminated in the subsequent financial year through some unrestricted donations and a first application for Theatre Tax Relief.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees are acutely aware that, as a growing organisation, much more needs to be done in the ensuing years to increase the charity's reserves and have set a target of £20,000, this being roughly equivalent to either 3 months' running costs or the amount considered prudent to mitigate against potential financial risks (such as the last minute cancellation of a small-medium tour or engagement). The timetable for meeting this updated reserves target has been set at 3-5 years to allow time to build up this amount at a sustainable pace.

At the year end the total unrestricted funds was a deficit of £4,292 (2024 – a surplus of £3,226) which is short of the charity's policy.

Going Concern

The Trustees consider that, at the date of the signing of the Report and Accounts, the Charity is a going concern, based on their review of existing funds, secured income for future periods and expected cash flows. This takes into account the impact of the reduced level of grant from Arts Council England and the ongoing evolution of our business model.

FUNDERS

The model of our work is expensive and so, as well as the mixed economy of guaranteed fees from festivals and venues, box office splits and self-promotions, we rely heavily on fundraised income. ACE funding has proved hard to come by since the pandemic. In 2024/2025 we were lucky to secure an ACE grant of £17,777 towards *What the Dickens?* However, our main source of income is from trusts and foundations because, for a small arts organisation, we have particular skills in fundraising from trusts. The majority are small grants of £1000- £5000. We also run appeals to the public.

The Telling is most grateful to the individuals and organisations who supported the charity during the year. Without them we would have struggled to enable our programme. For a small organisation to have raised £59,160 from trusts in such a challenging context shows the importance and distinctiveness of our work and our ability to articulate that importance and to fundraise effectively.

All our funding has been toward aspects of our **Touring and Project Fund** to enable us to take performances, workshops around England, with a focus on places that miss out in being able to access most touring circuits. Since the end of the 2024/25 year, we are now exploiting opportunities, working towards an innovative model, working with partner artistic collaborators (CarmenCo on the project: *Creating Carmen* and young vocal ensemble The Mancunium Consort on *Breaking the Rules* in Autumn 2025). This means that in some cases, the partner can front the applications. This has the double benefit that these partner organisations can learn from our expertise, make connections with new funders and learn how to write applications, whilst also enabling The Telling to benefit from grants from trusts we could not approach, due to many of them asking for one, two or three-year gaps before you can reapply.

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

ASSESSMENT OF MAJOR RISKS

The Trustees have considered risks to which The Telling is exposed and have established appropriate procedures to mitigate the impact of those risks. The outlook continues to be a challenging one. The main difficulties faced by The Telling and all other arts organisations is a perfect storm of rising costs, combined with the cost-of-living also impacting significantly on ticket sale income and making promoters risk-averse. However, we have learnt much about the challenges ahead which are likely to remain:

- a) A need for enhanced funding to mitigate losses due to fewer promoter engagements, reduced fees from promoters and reduced ticket income from self-promoted events
- b) A climate in which competition for funds (including from trusts and foundations) is fiercer than ever

Our future plans above detail how we have already made changes to the model of our work to involve more paid engagements alongside fundraising for our more risky residencies/self-promotions, which depend on ticket income and also an increase in working in partnership to share risk and fundraising. The increase in paid engagements will mitigate the risk, alongside plans to continue to build our fundraising, which continues to increase significantly year on year, despite these challenges.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

The Telling is a charitable incorporated organisation and has no share capital. It registered with the Charity Commission on 30 January 2019 and is governed by its constitution. In the event of a winding up, while a member or within one year of ceasing to be a member, the member's liability is limited to £5.

Management

Managerially, Clare Norburn continued in her role as Artistic Director on a pro bono basis, supported by our General Manager Stephanie Pillinger. This management team, together with a focused and dedicated Board of Trustees, has continued the strengthening of the organisation with tight controls over all aspects of planning, including deciding on repertoire for programmes, scheduling, budgeting, and monitoring of financial forecasts.

Clare Norburn (who is also our playwright, producer and was a singer until her retirement in December 2024) oversees strategic and artistic planning, budgeting, fundraising and partnerships. Clare works approx. 2 days a week for The Telling on a pro-bono basis. She is paid for singing, producing and writing projects. She earns her living mostly from freelance fundraising.

Stephanie Pillinger, General Manager, has worked for The Telling since 2018, significantly increasing her skills each year. Steph oversees project management, logistics, marketing, press and works with Clare to support on fundraising and finances. She also attends some of the live shows. She works for The Telling 3 days a week.

The Telling engages freelance musicians, actors, directors, lighting designers, costume makers and other creatives on a project-by-project basis. All are paid on a freelance rehearsal and project-by-project basis, and none is a permanent employee of the charity.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall governance of the charity. The Trustees are not artists involved in the charity's work.

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The Trustees undertake a skills audit to determine the skills to best support the objects of the charity. Trustees are recruited via an open recruitment process which is advertised in the arts and charity press/websites and through the charity's own website, social media and mailing list. A full Trustee pack is provided outlining the landscape in which we operate, our history and business plans. The Trustees may be appointed at the discretion, and with the approval, of the existing Trustees. New Trustees are briefed of their duties by existing Trustees and by the Artistic Director and General Manager who discuss the training needs of the new Trustee. New Trustees are encouraged to attend training on the responsibilities and role of a Trustee.

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity registration number: 1181802

Principal office: 168 Percy Road
Twickenham
TW2 6JF

Trustees

The trustees serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Catherine Magdalen Edis (Chair) (resigned 10 January 2025)
Elizabeth Davies (Chair from 10 January 2025)
Joanne McIntosh
Chung Hin Chloe Lam (appointed 10 January 2025)

No trustee received any remuneration for services during the period, other than those disclosed in note 7, nor did they have any beneficial interest in any contract with the charity.

Banker: HSBC
312 Seven Sisters Road
Finsbury Park
London
N4 2AW

Independent Examiner: Barcant Beardon Limited
Chartered Accountants
8 Blackstock Mews
Islington
London
N4 2BT

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial period which show a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operational existence.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report was approved by the trustees on *13th January 2026* and signed on their behalf.

Elizabeth Davies

.....
Elizabeth Davies
Chair of Trustees

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF

THE TELLING

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025, which are set out on pages 14 to 24.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees 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; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

14 January 2026

SFCW

Shu Fen Chung FCCA ACA
BARCANT BEARDON LIMITED
Chartered Accountants

8 Blackstock Mews
Islington
London N4 2BT

THE TELLING

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	Restricted Funds 2025 £	Unrestricted Funds 2025 £	Total Funds 2025 £	Total Funds 2024 £
<i>Income and endowments from:</i>					
Donations and legacies	3	59,160	91,906	151,066	96,647
Charitable activities	4	-	50,866	50,866	39,420
Total income and endowments		<u>59,160</u>	<u>142,772</u>	<u>201,932</u>	<u>136,067</u>
<i>Expenditure on:</i>					
Charitable activities	5	<u>41,377</u>	<u>150,290</u>	<u>191,667</u>	<u>143,930</u>
Total expenditure		<u>41,377</u>	<u>150,290</u>	<u>191,667</u>	<u>143,930</u>
<i>Net income/(expenditure) for the year</i>		17,783	(7,518)	10,265	(7,863)
Transfers between funds	11	-	-	-	-
<i>Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds for the year</i>		17,783	(7,518)	10,265	(7,863)
Total funds brought forward	11	-	3,226	3,226	11,089
Total funds carried forward	11	<u>17,783</u>	<u>(4,292)</u>	<u>13,491</u>	<u>3,226</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised during the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

THE TELLING

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
<i>Current Assets</i>			
Debtors	8	4,624	5,780
Cash at bank and in hand		11,945	8,280
		<u>16,569</u>	<u>14,060</u>
<i>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</i>	9	<u>(3,078)</u>	<u>(10,834)</u>
<i>Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)</i>		<u>13,491</u>	<u>3,226</u>
<i>Net Assets/Liabilities</i>		<u><u>13,491</u></u>	<u><u>3,226</u></u>
<i>Funds</i>			
Unrestricted funds			
Restricted Funds	11	17,783	-
Unrestricted Funds	11	<u>(4,292)</u>	<u>3,226</u>
		<u>13,491</u>	<u>3,226</u>

Approved by the trustees on 13th January 2026 and signed on its behalf.

Elizabeth Davies

.....
Elizabeth Davies
Chair of Trustees

The notes on pages 16 to 24 form part of these financial statements.

THE TELLING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1.0 Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

1.1 Basis of Preparation

The Telling is a charitable incorporation organisation. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £5 per member of the charity. The registered office is 168 Percy Road, Twickenham TW2 6JF.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements are prepared under the historic cost convention. The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the company. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared to give a 'true and fair' view and have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a 'true and fair view'. This departure has involved following the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 rather than the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice effective from 1 April 2005 which has since been withdrawn.

1.2 Going Concern

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties regarding the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern and have prepared these financial statements on this basis.

1.3 Fund Accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes. Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes. Restricted funds are subject to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

1.4 Income Recognition

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

Donated services and facilities, including gifts in kind, are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified and a third party is bearing the cost. No amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers.

THE TELLING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

For donations to be recognised the charity will have been notified of the amounts and the settlement date in writing. If there are conditions attached to the donation and this requires a level of performance before entitlement can be obtained then income is deferred until those conditions are fully met or the fulfilment of those conditions is within the control of the charity and it is probable that they will be fulfilled. Donations received with imposed restrictions are classified as restricted funds,

Revenue grants are credited as incoming resources when they are receivable provided conditions for receipt have been complied with. Where grants awarded for specific concerts or events are received in advance of the performance, they are deferred so that concert and event costs align with related income.

Performance and outreach income is recognised in the period in which the activity takes place.

1.5 Expenditure Recognition

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Support costs are those costs incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity. Governance costs are those incurred in connection with administration of the charity and compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements and are included in support costs.

Costs of raising funds are costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, and those incurred in trading activities that raise funds.

1.6 Stock

Stocks are CDs for sale and are stated at the lower of cost and estimated selling price.

1.7 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

1.8 Creditors and Provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount.

THE TELLING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

2.0 *Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgements*

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3.0 *Income from Donations and Legacies*

	Restricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Donations and gifts	-	74,968	74,968	19,444
Gift Aid	-	16,938	16,938	3,705
Grants	59,160	-	59,160	73,498
	<u>59,160</u>	<u>91,906</u>	<u>151,066</u>	<u>96,647</u>

3.1 Income from donation and legacies was £151,066 (2024 - £96,647) of which £59,160 (2024 - £73,498) was attributable to restricted funds and £91,906 (2024 - £23,149) was attributable to unrestricted funds.

THE TELLING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

3.2 Analysis of Grants	2025	2024
	£	£
Angel Early Music	3,000	3,000
Arts Council England	17,777	25,195
Cockayne Fund	5,000	-
Colwinston Charitable Trust	8,000	6,000
Continuo Foundation	4,000	5,000
Gale Family Trust	1,000	-
Grimmitt Trust	1,200	1,000
Scops Arts Trust	-	7,500
Shoresh Charitable Trust	1,983	1,983
Sir John Fisher Foundation	-	7,000
The Darkley Trust	1,000	-
The Golsoncott Foundation	1,200	1,000
The Gwendoline and Margaret Davies Charity	2,000	-
The Hadfield Trust	-	1,500
The Harold Hyam Wingate Foundation	2,000	-
The Hugh Fraser Foundation	2,000	-
The James Beattie Charitable Trust	1,000	870
The JTH Charitable Trust	500	-
The Marchus Trust	-	5,000
The Pear Tree Fund for Music	2,000	-
The Radcliffe Trust	-	2,000
The Souter Charity	3,000	3,000
The Victoria Wood Foundation	-	2,450
The W M Mann Foundation	1,000	-
Unity Theatre Trust	500	-
WE Dunn Trust	1,000	1,000
	<u>59,160</u>	<u>73,498</u>

4.0 *Income from Charitable Activities*

	Restricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Promoters' fees	-	11,014	11,014	9,640
Box office and CD sales	-	39,852	39,852	29,780
	<u>-</u>	<u>50,866</u>	<u>50,866</u>	<u>39,420</u>

4.1 Income from charitable activities was £50,866 (2024 - £39,420) of which £nil (2024 - £nil) was attributable to restricted funds and £50,866 (2024 - £39,420) was attributable to unrestricted funds.

THE TELLING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

5.0 Analysis of Expenditure on Charitable Activities

Charitable Activities 2025	Activities undertaken directly 2025 £	Support costs 2025 £	Governance costs 2025 £	Total 2025 £
Artists	95,095	-	-	95,095
Venues	8,856	-	-	8,856
Lighting	15,541	-	-	15,541
Travel and subsistence	29,488	-	-	29,488
Marketing	13,929	1	-	13,930
Film and CD production	59	-	-	59
Project administration	6,432	16,451	-	22,883
Sundry expenses	2,237	-	-	2,237
Bank charges	-	578	-	578
Accountancy	-	-	3,000	3,000
	<u>171,637</u>	<u>17,030</u>	<u>3,000</u>	<u>191,667</u>

5.1 Charitable Activities 2024	Activities undertaken directly 2024 £	Support costs 2024 £	Governance costs 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Artists	64,430	-	-	64,430
Venues	7,036	-	-	7,036
Lighting	12,324	-	-	12,324
Travel and subsistence	14,422	-	-	14,422
Marketing	9,763	350	-	10,113
Film and CD production	342	-	-	342
Project administration	27,850	-	-	27,850
Sundry expenses	2,359	-	-	2,359
Bank charges	-	614	-	614
Accountancy	-	-	4,440	4,440
	<u>138,526</u>	<u>964</u>	<u>4,440</u>	<u>143,930</u>

5.2 Of the £191,667 expenditure in 2025 (2024 - £143,930), £41,377 (2024 - £110,676) was attributable to restricted funds and £150,290 (2024 - £33,254) was attributable to unrestricted funds.

THE TELLING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

6.0	<i>Net Income/(Expenditure) for the Year</i>	2025	2024
		£	£
	<i>This is stated after charging</i>		
	Independent examiner's fee	3,000	4,440
		<u>3,000</u>	<u>4,440</u>

7.0 ***Trustees Remuneration and Expenses***

Clare Norburn resigned as a trustee on 21 September 2023. The following payments were made to her up the date of her resignation. These payments were made in respect of services provided to the charity as a performer and writer, and as authorised by the governing document and the Trustees:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Performing/writing fees	-	6,140
Expenses reclaimed	-	35
	<u>-</u>	<u>6,175</u>
	<u>-</u>	<u>6,175</u>

No other members of the Board of Trustees received any remuneration or expenses during the year.

No trustee or other person related to the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity during the year (2024 – nil).

8.0	<i>Debtors</i>	2025	2024
		£	£
	Prepayments	714	2,139
	Accrued income	3,910	3,641
		<u>4,624</u>	<u>5,780</u>
		<u>4,624</u>	<u>5,780</u>

9.0	<i>Creditors: Amounts Falling Due Within One Year</i>	2025	2024
		£	£
	Accruals	3,000	4,440
	Deferred income	78	6,394
		<u>3,078</u>	<u>10,834</u>
		<u>3,078</u>	<u>10,834</u>

THE TELLING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

10.0 Deferred Income

Deferred income comprises of monies received in advance for performances and events occurring after the year end.

	Total £
Balance as at 1 April 2024	6,394
Amount released to income earned from charitable activities	(6,394)
Amount deferred in year	78
	<hr/>
Balance as at 31 March 2025	78
	<hr/> <hr/>

11.0 Analysis of Charitable Funds

Unrestricted Funds – Current Year

	Balance 1 Apr 24	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Transfers £	Balance 31 Mar 25 £
General funds	3,226	142,772	(150,290)	-	(4,292)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Unrestricted Funds – Previous Year

	Balance 1 Apr 23	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Transfers £	Balance 31 Mar 24 £
General funds	10,870	62,569	(33,254)	(36,959)	3,226
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Name of unrestricted fund

Description, nature and purposes of the fund

General funds

The “free reserves” after allowing for any designated funds.

11.1 Restricted Funds – Current Year

	Balance 1 Apr 24	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Transfers £	Balance 31 Mar 25 £
Touring and project fund	-	59,160	(41,377)	-	17,783
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Restricted Funds – Previous Year

	Balance 1 Apr 23	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Transfers £	Balance 31 Mar 24 £
Touring and project fund	219	73,498	(110,676)	36,959	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

THE TELLING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

<i>Name of restricted fund</i>	<i>Description, nature and purposes of the fund</i>
Touring and project fund	Funds raised specifically to deliver projects, to rehearse and tour those projects including developing audiences in places which do not otherwise access any or much touring performances.

At the year end the following funds are carried forward to be used in a future year:

	£	Purpose
Colwinston Charitable Trust	5,000	Welsh residency: May – Nov 2025
Gale Family Trust	500	Breaking the Rules performance in Bedford in Nov 2025
Shoresh Charitable Trust	1,983	Into the Melting Pot performances in May 2025
The Darkley Trust	300	Into the Melting Pot performance in Wales in May 2025
The Gwendoline and Margaret Davies Charity	1,000	Into the Melting Pot performance in Wales in May 2025
The Harold Hyam Wingate Foundation	2,000	Into the Melting Pot tour & outreach: May 2025
The Hugh Fraser Foundation	2,000	Scottish performances: May 2025 – Feb 2026
The Pear Tree Fund for Music	2,000	Scottish performances: May 2025 – Feb 2026
The Souter Charity	3,000	Refugee outreach project: May 2025 & Hildegard tour: Sep 2025
	<u>17,783</u>	

11.2 The net transfer of £nil (2024 - £36,959) from general funds to the restricted funds represents additional funding towards the projects.

THE TELLING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

12.0 Analysis of Net Assets Between Funds – Current Year

	Restricted Funds 2025 £	Unrestricted Funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £
Cash at bank and in hand	17,069	(5,124)	11,945
Other net current assets/(liabilities)	714	832	1,546
	<u>17,783</u>	<u>(4,292)</u>	<u>13,491</u>

Analysis of Net Assets Between Funds – Previous Year

	Restricted Funds 2024 £	Unrestricted Funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	-	8,280	8,280
Other net current assets/(liabilities)	-	(5,054)	(5,054)
	<u>-</u>	<u>3,226</u>	<u>3,226</u>

13.0 Related Party Transactions

Aside from trustee remuneration and expenses disclosed in note 7, one trustee had a close family member who had transactions with the charity during the year. The trustee's family member was paid £4,421 to provide musical services to the charity which includes being a composer, arranger and performing at shows. In the previous year a trustee's family member was paid £1,681 for designing costumes for the performers and related expenses. For each transaction, the trustees specifically met to discuss the engagement and payment to the family member, at which relevant trustee was not present. The remaining trustees felt that appointing this family member would save the charity money in comparison with going to a composer who did not know the Telling's work: and therefore, agreeing this limited period of work was to the benefit of the charity and its work.

THE TELLING

England & Wales - Charity number 1181802

Accounts

THE TELLING
(CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION)
REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

CHARITY COMMISSION REGISTRATION NO. 1181802

THE TELLING

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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14	Statement of Financial Activities (including Income and Expenditure Account)
15	Balance Sheet
16 - 23	Notes to the Financial Statements

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The Trustees present their report and financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" (FRS 102) in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's Constitution, the Charities Act 2011 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland published in October 2019.

Objectives and Activities

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charities Commission's general guidance on public benefit. This is borne out by deliveries of activities outlined in this report, which are in line with the main objectives of The Telling and the activities to deliver against those objectives.

The Telling aims to advance the arts and education for the public benefit. We do this through the promotion, support and encouragement of music and theatre by presenting performances, workshops, talks and recordings, often combining music and theatre and sometimes other art-forms and taking performances to places to reach people who do not usually access such performances.

We:

- a) give high quality performances, focusing on performances where music and theatre collide in interesting ways
- b) work with young people in schools and amateur performers, singers and instrumentalists from a variety of walks of life, enabling them to develop and improve their creative, dramatic and musical skills.



What the Dickens? R&D autumn 2023 in Hove – photo Robert Piwko

We perform across the UK and, alongside a series of engagements, run our programme of residencies, targeting places where there is little classical or early music touring which are currently Liverpool, Barrow Peninsula/South Cumbria, Colchester, Folkestone, Conwy, Cardiff, Bedford and Wolverhampton.

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

We use theatre, new writing, music (including a focus on early music but also classical, world music, folk music and music-theatre), story-telling and film, to create narratives newly-written plays with music. We use theatre to demystify the music and reach people who are not usually attracted to classical concerts – but also to use music to heighten feeling, give insight to the characters and/or plot or to cut against the plot in interesting ways.

We perform in churches, theatres, art centres, pubs, church hall, community centres, taking performance deep into the heart of communities. We often perform in and around audiences and use costume, stage lighting/candlelight.

We engage a pool of leading directors, actors, musicians, lighting designers, composers and costume makers. Our Artistic Director, Clare Norburn has devised a new genre where music and drama collide. Her concert/plays have attracted **4 star reviews in *The Times* and *The Guardian*** and performances at **Bridgewater Hall, St George's Bristol** and **LSO St Lukes**. The stage director we work with, **Nicholas Renton** directed Andrew Davies' BAFTA nominated ***Mrs Gaskell's Wives and Daughters*** for **BBC TV** and episodes of ***Lewis*, *Musketeers*, *Silent Witness* and *George Gently***.

We have been on **BBC Radio's *In Tune*, *Woman's Hour* and *Saturday Live*** and performed for promoters including **Music at Oxford, Buxton International Festival, Lake District Summer Music, Brighton Early Music Festival, Little Missenden Festival and Keele Arts**. We have released three CDs – all on the **First Hand Records** label.

Achievements and Performance

This is the Trustees fifth report to the Charity Commission.

TOURING PERFORMANCES AND WORKSHOPS

Summary:

The Telling attempts to break new ground, where new writing by Artistic Director Clare Norburn and music collide. We tour high-quality, accessible and affordable productions: combining engagements by leading promoters with self-promotions in places that are often missed out on touring circuits, including building audiences and partnerships in Wolverhampton, South Cumbria, Conwy (North Wales), Bedford and Folkestone.

2023/24 saw us give 33 UK performances reaching nearly 3000 people and 17 workshops/outreach sessions including at **The Anvil, Basingstoke, Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton, The Coro, Ulverston, Bedford Music Club, Victoria Hall, Grange-over-Sands, Canterbury University, Stoke Newington Early Music Festival and Stroud Green Festival**. Alongside paid engagements, we are also unusual in the way that we fundraise to take performances to places which “miss out” in accessing touring circuits: so our tours are a mixed economy of guaranteed fees, box office splits and self-promotions, backed by reciprocal marketing partners on the ground. In 2023/24 we continued to fundraise and tour to our Residency places which otherwise miss out on accessing professional music and theatre touring. We also built relationships with repeat venues where they operate a box office split/shared risk eg **JW3 Arts Centre (May 2023) and The Coro, Ulverston** (two performances in 2023/24).

Particular Achievements

In 2024, The Telling won the prestigious **Audience Participation of the Year Award** organised by the **European Early Music organisation, REMA** for our ***Songs and Stories*** project in partnership with animateur **Sarah Atter and Wolverhampton Refugee and Migrant Centre** in January and February 2024.

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Also, **BBC Radio 3's *The Early Music*** show presented an hour-long feature on our work in March 2024 to tie in with International Women's Day.

The **hallmark of our work** is our distinctive collision of music and drama. Our early programmes started with early music and drama but we are increasingly moving away from that limitation, whilst keeping our early music repertoire still in our repertory. The Telling's programmes are written by Clare Norburn whose latter work takes inspiration from Brecht, often tearing down the fourth wall, and iconoclastic TV playwright, Dennis Potter, exploring the nexus between memory and the characters' inner or fantasy lives, and harnessing music's unique capacity to trigger memories and feelings. Several are political or provide commentary on current issues seen through the lens of the past. For example: celebrity culture and #MeToo are explored in *What the Dickens? Into the Melting Pot* focuses on religious and cultural intolerance and the plight of refugees

"Clare Norburn takes moments in history to make us understand the present more clearly" Robin Soans, playwright

View a list of The Telling's projects here: www.thetelling.co.uk/programmes

Touring aims:

While we maintain a commitment to fundraise to take work to places which miss out (which means more expensive and higher risk self-promoted events) our model shifted in 2023/24 and will continue going to combine that funded work with paid engagements and box office split/shared risks to create a more sustainable model. This is shaping up well with confirmed engagements in 2024/25 at **Beverley Early Music Festival/NCEM, Newbury Spring Festival** and a longer run at **OSO Arts Centre** in Barnes as well as return visits and growing partnerships with **Arena theatre, Wolverhampton and St Edwards in Cardiff**.

The Telling's pioneering **Touring and Project fund is our key overarching programme**. Within this our **Residency Programme** aims to build audiences by taking performances to places that "miss out". We aim to create **equal access for low-engaged communities** in areas of **economic disadvantage, where other performing arts organisations dare not tour**.

In the 2023/24 financial year, we built audiences in the following places, which otherwise receive a limited touring offer: **Wolverhampton** (3 performances), **South Cumbria** (Ulverston and Grange-over-Sands: 4 shows), **Folkestone** (2 performances), shows in **Conwy, N Wales**(2 performances), **Cardiff** (which has no real early music touring: 3 performances), **Mistley and Manningtree** (2 performances; within **Tendring** local authority, which the **Arts Council** has designated as **low arts-engaged**), as well as performances in **Liverpool** where little early music tours.



Into the Melting Pot at JW3, Hampstead - photo Robert Piwko

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

We ran 4 touring projects which were:

1. ***Into the Melting Pot***: set in 1492 in a Spanish Christian/Muslim/Jewish community, a Jewish woman (played by Suzanne Ahmet (National Theatre, Chester Storyhouse)) is forced to leave. Her story is startlingly contemporary, with resonances to Windrush, Black Lives Matter & recent antisemitism, and is played out to a soundtrack of plaintive Sephardic songs & lively Cantigas which fuse medieval & Arabic instruments/styles, making early music accessible to a wider audience. **10 performances: 6 performances: May 2023 and 4 performances in February 2024**
2. ***Vision***: the imagined testimony of the extraordinary medieval abbess Hildegard of Bingen (played by Teresa Banham (RSC, Shared Experience)) alongside her haunting chant. Hildegard revisits and re-experiences meaningful episodes from her past which aims to give an insight into the painful visionary experiences she suffered throughout her life, covering some of the core emotional moments, coupled with her distinctive and mesmerising chant through which she felt she can 'say the unspeakable'. **4 performances: November 2023**
3. ***What the Dickens? R&D and workshop tour***: PLOT: It is Charles Dickens' last Christmas Eve: 1869. Against his doctor's wishes, he gives one of his acclaimed theatrical readings of A Christmas Carol, but from the moment the lights go down, his life becomes strangely entangled with Scrooge. Dickens' carefully managed image as a family man, who has created the very quintessence of Christmas, starts to unravel as he is "haunted" by his wife and mother of his ten children, Catherine Dickens and his secret young mistress, Ellen 'Nelly' Ternan. The "ghosts" force him to face his past, present and future. Can Dickens learn from them, repent - and be saved, as Scrooge was saved? Composer Steven Edis uses a mix of newly composed and arranged music to soundtrack the drama: he reimagines colourful Victorian popular songs, street music and carols, many of which we know Dickens played on the accordion and sang himself - **5 performances: October 2023**



What the Dickens? R&D autumn 2023 in Hove – photo Robert Piwko

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

- 4. *The Telling Unchained:*** is a different kind of concert: it's a fun, relaxed and informal performance of early music mixed with folk, improvisation, jamming and plenty of audience participation. The concept was created to educate and offer the audience a "behind-the-scenes" view of how we arrange medieval and traditional repertoire which is often a single line melody. We want to demystify the process. We carefully programme and discuss each piece and how to present it: which for this programme is just as important as performing it. Then in front of the audience, for some pieces, we demonstrate how we go about putting together an arrangement for our line-up. We also include one piece which is completely improvised on a ground bass, showing the audience the skill of our instrumentalists and talking them through what is happening musically. The repertoire is made up of a mix of medieval music, lute songs, and traditional/folk music which straddles the early music/folk divide like the popular collection of dance tunes by John Playford (1623–1686), which are often played by early musicians but also by folk musicians. We include some rousing drinking songs and rounds in the second half, teaching the audience and encouraging them to join in. **3 performances: May 2023 and January 2024**
- 5. *Carols through time:*** candlelit Carol tour which we performed around England and Wales, alongside live workshops, online workshops and an online Advent calendar of short films of carols. **11 performances December 2023**

All except *The Telling Unchained* and *Carols through time* were directed by Nicholas Renton (BAFTA-nominated *Mrs Gaskell's Wives and Daughters*, *Musketeers*, *A Room With A View*, *Lewis*, *Silent Witness*) and written by singer/playwright, Clare Norburn.

LIVE WORKSHOPS: While on tour, we capitalise on bringing high-quality artists to excluded communities around the country by offering music workshops to local schools ahead of the evening performances. During the year, we continued our distinctive model of 45 minute live workshops before concerts for all comers, tied to *Into the Melting Pot* and the carol tour, targeted at "Community Choir level" with no need to read music. These workshops take place a little ahead of a concert, enabling participants to join us in performing a few numbers either during the concert from their seats or often at the start of the second half. The workshops were free for concert ticket holders. Singer Clare Norburn also visited two primary schools in Conwy and Ulverston, Cumbria teaching carols to pupils who then performed with the Telling to their peer and parents at the end of the day. The Headteacher at Ysgol Porth y Felin in Conwy fed back that the pupils received new singing skills and knowledge:



Clare Norburn leading a schools singing workshop

"The pupils learned different carols in a very short space of time – some of them intricate and all unfamiliar, so they came away with many new carols and melodies.

It was also clear that we provided the pupils a new and different experience which they wouldn't have received if we hadn't visited:

"This was an expertise that we couldn't offer in school, and having musicians playing and singing was a great experience for the pupils."

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

We also started a very positive ongoing relationship with amateur and musician Sarah Atter. Sarah has taken inspiration from our stage works and through her involvement school students in Cumbria and Wolverhampton (places which really access high quality music education projects) were facilitated to create their own songs over three sessions and perform them to an audience.

Sarah also worked with us on our award-winning Songs and Stories project, which was delivered with Wolverhampton Refugee and Migrant Centre in January/February 2024 and Manchester Jewish Museum in May 2024. We have plans to take this project to Cardiff and Birmingham in 2025.

"It helped with reframing the mind and eventually it created hope and empowerment, and it helped with integration and building connections"

Staff feedback from the Wolverhampton Refugee and Migrant Centre

"I was in a state of depression before coming to the workshops, but after engaging with you in the stories and songs, I felt better."

Participant feedback from the Wolverhampton Refugee and Migrant Centre

We continued our singing workshops on Zoom with 2 one-off online singing carol workshops. This enabled our online community, which we had developed and got to know very well during weekly workshops for over a year starting during the first week of lockdown. These online sessions enabled us to continue to connect with this online audience who are across the audience from Devon to Glasgow and to give them a sense of our online touring.

Key artistic team: Our creative team is led by Artistic Director **Clare Norburn** (playwright, producer and former soprano) who won the 2023 Colin Skipp Memorial Radio Playwriting Competition and was one of 7 writers, selected out of 400, for BBC/ACE-funded The Space's Pitch Perfect scheme to receive mentoring and be commissioned to develop a play with music for national BBC radio.

Our regular acclaimed director **Nicholas Renton** cut his teeth in theatre, going on to direct at the RSC and then spent 30 years directing for the BBC and ITV, including being BAFTA-nominated for BBC TV's Mrs Gaskell's Wives and Daughters.

Our lighting designer is **Natalie Rowland**.

We work with a creative pool of:

- leading actors including **Alec Newman, Rachael Stirling, Danny Webb, Dominic Marsh, Clive Hayward, Karen Ascoe, Molly Lynch, Gerald Kyd, Suzanne Ahmet, Teresa Banham, Leila Mimmack** and **Niall Ashdown**
- acclaimed musicians including many who are early music specialists including **Emily Baines, Jean Kelly, Jamie Akers, Clemmie Franks, Heloise Bernard, Giles Lewin, Alison Kinder, Avital Raz** and **Maya Levy**.

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Audience Feedback:

We continued to receive moving feedback from workshop participants and the public about our work. This is just some audience feedback questionnaire responses we received:



The Telling Unchained at The Old Queen's Head Pub in Islington - photo Robert Piwko

The Telling Unchained

"Joyful, alive, energised-but also emotional! of your skills, talent and that buzz of working and playing together to make a whole. I'm smiling just remembering the event"

Vision:

"Beautiful sounds and voices. Very wonderful and moving. Congratulations to all the cast. Thank you for coming to Wales. See you in June 2024."

"Stunning - all of it - the way the story was told - the transcendent singing, harp and lighting - all just perfect"

"One of the most moving performances I have ever experienced, it will live long in my memory"

"I honestly didn't have any idea what to expect. I was absolutely transported. It was a wonderful immersive experience. Beautiful. The singers were hauntingly moving and the actor playing Hildegard amazing. Feel like I lived with her and got to know her."

What the Dickens?

"Really wonderful engaging experience with a wonderful narrative and engaging performers"

"Unusual - original - enriching!"

"We enjoyed it! Amusing. We liked the music. Good concept. Lots of talking points. Catherine was excellent, as was Mr Violin!"

"Loved it. Well written, well performed, well designed."

"Lively innovative, funny & fresh. Informative & engaging. Inventive."

Into the Melting Pot:

"Tonight was wonderful. It meant a great deal to me. My ancestor was Pedro Cansino one of the first Jews burnt at the stake in Seville in 1481 and the rest of the family had to leave in 1492 and went to Oran (Algeria) for a couple of hundred years then round the Mediterranean until they arrived in the UK late 1900s. We can trace them to early 1300s so the piece about the pogrom in Seville. The whole show meant a great deal to many Jews - it made them think of the Holocaust. Your music, singing and story telling were superlative. Thank you."

"I am grateful for you sending this to me and most importantly, putting on this play which explores a painful, but important part of history that many are not familiar with."

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

"I loved the music, your voices, the bright sparkle of life, energy and power, the atmosphere you created."

"I really like having the storyline running through as I don't know that period in history - made it easier to listen to music. Lovely."

"The whole thing worked really well together - the storytelling/acting and music"

"It was absolutely wonderful, so glad we came. You are all so talented and beautiful! Music was outstanding!"

Marketing and Press coverage

In each of our residency locations we developed partnerships with venues and other arts organisations that helped us reach local audiences. We set up reciprocal marketing partnerships with local arts organisations at each of our tour locations, asking for their help in spreading the word and offering to return the favour.

We successfully use Facebook Ad campaign; usually the highest percentage of audience members who fill in our feedback questionnaires say they discovered the event through Facebook. This in combination with reciprocal marketing with partners and a flyer distribution plan on the ground worked strongly together.

We also worked hard to secure local press coverage securing **many local BBC Radio** interviews including **BBC Cumbria, BBC West Midlands, BBC Essex, BBC Kent, BBC Sussex and BBC Merseyside**).

★★★★ *"a very moving experience that captures the imagination, as well as connects the audience to the devastation caused by persecution, exile, and loss... The music is expertly created... The songs are sung exquisitely... There is a strong sense of community woven through this experience, and these stirring voices must be heard"* The Reviews Hub (May 2023) on ***Into the Melting Pot in Hove***

We mentioned under achievements the hour-long feature on **BBC Radio 3's *The Early Music Show*** in **March 2024**, in which Clare Norburn was interviewed and extracts from The Telling's 3 CDs were performed throughout the programme, with a focus on our work to celebrate the achievements of medieval women composers. But also Patricia Hammond (mezzo) Jean Kelly (harp) and Clare Norburn (soprano) also were interviewed and performed carols on **BBC Radio 3's *InTune*** in December 2023 to promote the carol tour.

SHARING OUR LEARNING WITH OTHER ENSEMBLES AND COMPANIES

Given The Telling has an interesting formula for developing residencies in areas where there is little or no early music touring, we share our learning (both successes and failures) so others can benefit from our learning and explore how to tour and develop residencies themselves. We are currently working with the Mancunium Consort on a project in late 2025 helping them develop fundraising and budgeting skills.

MANAGEMENT

Managerially, our Artistic Director, Clare Norburn continued in her role as Artistic Director on a pro bono basis, supported by our General Manager Stephanie Williams. This management team, together with a focused and dedicated board of trustees, has continued the strengthening of the organisation with tight controls over all aspects of planning, including deciding on repertoire for programmes, scheduling, budgeting, and monitoring of financial forecasts.

Clare Norburn, Artistic Director (who is also our playwright, producer and has been a singer, but is retiring from singing in December 2024 due to hearing loss challenges) oversees strategic and artistic planning, budgeting, fundraising and partnerships. Clare works approx. 2 days a week for The Telling on a pro-bono basis. She is paid for singing, producing and writing projects. She earns her living mostly from freelance fundraising.

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Stephanie Pillinger, General Manager, has worked for The Telling since 2018, significantly increasing her skills each year. Steph oversees project management, logistics, marketing, press and works with Clare to support on fundraising and finances. She also attends most of the live shows. She works for The Telling 3 days a week.

Financial Review

The Telling is growing: our income up to 2021/2022 was around £60-70K each year (excepting 2020 being lower – £40K – due to the pandemic); but 2022/23 saw a leap to £109K and these accounts for 2023/24 show a significant and continuing increase to £136K with projections for 2024/25 onwards showing incremental upwards. We expect income to maintain in the region of £150-200K for the next few years.

Our reserves as of 31st March 2024 were £3,226. However, we received a major one-off donation of £40,000 just after the year end to ensure the future sustainability of the charity and since then have secured many grants including from Arts Council England later in 2024.

The model of our work is expensive and so, as well as the mixed economy of guaranteed fees from festivals and venues, box office splits and self-promotions, we rely heavily on fundraised income. ACE funding has proved hard to come by since the pandemic with The Telling receiving only one project grant (which is within our 2022/23 accounts) since 2020. Our main source of income is from trusts and foundations because, for a small arts organisation, we have particular skills in fundraising from trusts. The majority are small grants of £1,000- £5,000. We also run appeals to the public.

The Telling is most grateful to the individuals and organisations who supported the charity during the year. Without them we would have struggled to enable our programme. For a small organisation to have raised £73,498 in such a challenging context shows the importance and distinctiveness of our work and our ability to articulate that importance and to fundraise effectively.

All our funding has been toward aspects of our **Touring and Project Fund** to enable us to take performances, workshops around England, with a focus on places that miss out in being able to access most touring circuits.

We are currently starting to exploit potential opportunities, working towards an innovative model, which Clare Norburn has trialled in another organisation, working with partner artistic collaborators (CarmenCo on the project: Creating Carmen and young vocal ensemble The Mancunium Consort on Breaking the Rules) and helping them build their fundraising skills. This means that in some cases, the partner can front the applications. This has the double benefit that these two partner organisations can learn from our expertise, make connections with new funders and learn how to write applications, whilst also enabling The Telling to benefit from grants from trusts we could not approach, due to many of them asking for one, two or three-year gaps before you can reapply.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees are acutely aware that, as a growing organisation, much more needs to be done in the ensuing years to increase the charity's reserves and have set a target of £20,000, this being roughly equivalent to either 3 months' running costs or the amount considered prudent to mitigate against potential financial risks (such as the last minute cancellation of a small-medium tour or engagement). The timetable for meeting this updated reserves target has been set at 3-5 years to allow time to build up this amount at a sustainable pace.

At the year end the total unrestricted funds was £3,226 (2023 - £10,870) which is short of the charity's policy.

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Principal Funding Sources

The principal funding source for the charity is currently by way of grants.

ASSESSMENT OF MAJOR RISKS

The Trustees have considered risks to which The Telling is exposed and have established appropriate procedures to mitigate the impact of those risks. The outlook continues to be a challenging one. The main difficulty faced by The Telling and all other arts organisations is a perfect storm of rising costs, combined with the cost-of-living also impacting significantly on ticket sale income and making promoters risk-averse. However, we have learnt much about the challenges ahead which are likely to remain:

- a) A need for enhanced funding to mitigate losses due to fewer promoter engagements, reduced fees from promoters and reduced ticket income from self-promoted events
- b) A climate in which competition for funds is fiercer than ever

Our future plans above detail how we have already made changes to the model of our work to involve more paid engagements alongside fundraising for our more risky residencies/self-promotions, which depend on ticket income and also an increase in working in partnership to share risk and fundraising. The increase in paid engagements will mitigate the risk, alongside plans to continue to build our fundraising, which continues to increase significantly year on year, despite these challenges.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

The Telling is a charitable incorporated organisation and has no share capital. It registered with the Charity Commission on 30 January 2019 and is governed by its constitution. In the event of a winding up, while a member or within one year of ceasing to be a member, the member's liability is limited to £5.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall governance of the charity. With the exception of the Artistic Director, Clare Norburn, the Trustees are not artists involved in the charity's work. Clare Norburn also stepped down as a Trustee in September 2023.

Trustees may be appointed at the discretion, and with the approval, of the existing Trustees. New Trustees are briefed of their duties by existing Trustees.

The Telling engages musicians, actors, directors, lighting designers, costume makers and other creatives on a project-by-project basis. All are paid on a freelance rehearsal and concert-by-concert basis and none is a permanent employee of the charity. The administration of the charity during the year was undertaken on a pro bono basis by the Artistic Director, Clare Norburn, supported by a paid freelance part-time General Manager Stephanie Williams.

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity registration number: 1181802

Principal office: 168 Percy Road
Twickenham
TW2 6JF

Trustees

The trustees serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Catherine Magdalen Edis (Chair)
Elizabeth Davies
Joanne McIntosh
Clare Norburn (resigned 21 September 2023)

No trustee received any remuneration for services during the period, other than those disclosed in note 7, nor did they have any beneficial interest in any contract with the charity.

Banker: HSBC
312 Seven Sisters Road
Finsbury Park
London
N4 2AW

Independent Examiner: Barcant Beardon Limited
Chartered Accountants
8 Blackstock Mews
Islington
London
N4 2BT

THE TELLING

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

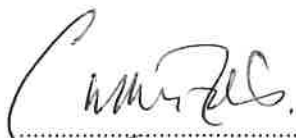
The law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial period which show a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 (FRS 102);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operational existence.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report was approved by the trustees on 10-01-2025 and signed on their behalf.



.....
Catherine Magdalen Edis
Chair of Trustees

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF

THE TELLING

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024, which are set out on pages 14 to 23.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees 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; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

15 January 2025



Shu Fen Chung FCCA ACA
BARCANT BEARDON LIMITED
Chartered Accountants

8 Blackstock Mews
Islington
London N4 2BT

THE TELLING

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	Restricted Funds 2024 £	Unrestricted Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
<i>Income and endowments from:</i>					
Donations and legacies	3	73,498	23,149	96,647	83,570
Charitable activities	4	-	39,420	39,420	25,446
Total income and endowments		<u>73,498</u>	<u>62,569</u>	<u>136,067</u>	<u>109,116</u>
<i>Expenditure on:</i>					
Charitable activities	5	<u>110,676</u>	<u>33,254</u>	<u>143,930</u>	<u>102,483</u>
Total expenditure		<u>110,676</u>	<u>33,254</u>	<u>143,930</u>	<u>102,483</u>
<i>Net income/(expenditure) for the year</i>		(37,178)	29,315	(7,863)	6,633
Transfers between funds	11	<u>36,959</u>	<u>(36,959)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<i>Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds for the year</i>		(219)	(7,644)	(7,863)	6,633
Total funds brought forward	11	<u>219</u>	<u>10,870</u>	<u>11,089</u>	<u>4,456</u>
Total funds carried forward	11	<u>-</u>	<u>3,226</u>	<u>3,226</u>	<u>11,089</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised during the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

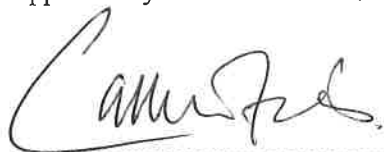
THE TELLING

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
<i>Current Assets</i>			
Debtors	8	5,780	1,016
Cash at bank and in hand		8,280	22,693
		<u>14,060</u>	<u>23,709</u>
<i>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</i>	9	<u>(10,834)</u>	<u>(12,620)</u>
<i>Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)</i>		<u>3,226</u>	<u>11,089</u>
<i>Net Assets/Liabilities</i>		<u><u>3,226</u></u>	<u><u>11,089</u></u>
<i>Funds</i>			
Unrestricted funds			
Restricted Funds	11	-	219
Unrestricted Funds	11	3,226	10,870
		<u>3,226</u>	<u>11,089</u>

Approved by the trustees on 10-01-2025 and signed on its behalf.



.....
Catherine Magdalen Edis
Chair of Trustees

The notes on pages 16 to 23 form part of these financial statements.

THE TELLING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1.0 Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

1.1 Basis of Preparation

The Telling is a charitable incorporation organisation. In the event of the charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £5 per member of the charity. The registered office is 168 Percy Road, Twickenham TW2 6JF.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements are prepared under the historic cost convention. The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the company. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared to give a 'true and fair' view and have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a 'true and fair view'. This departure has involved following the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 rather than the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice effective from 1 April 2005 which has since been withdrawn.

1.2 Going Concern

The charity is mainly reliant upon donations and grant income to raise revenue to meet future expenditure. The Trustees consider that it is appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. This assumes that the charity will be successful in its fundraising activities. The financial statements do not include any adjustments that would result if insufficient funds are raised. In formulating this assessment the Trustees have taken into consideration the impact of the global cost of living crisis on the charity's ability to raise funds.

1.3 Fund Accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes. Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes. Restricted funds are subject to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

1.4 Income Recognition

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

THE TELLING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Donated services and facilities, including gifts in kind, are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified and a third party is bearing the cost. No amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers.

For donations to be recognised the charity will have been notified of the amounts and the settlement date in writing. If there are conditions attached to the donation and this requires a level of performance before entitlement can be obtained then income is deferred until those conditions are fully met or the fulfilment of those conditions is within the control of the charity and it is probable that they will be fulfilled. Donations received with imposed restrictions are classified as restricted funds,

Revenue grants are credited as incoming resources when they are receivable provided conditions for receipt have been complied with. Where grants awarded for specific concerts or events are received in advance of the performance, they are deferred so that concert and event costs align with related income.

Performance and outreach income is recognised in the period in which the activity takes place.

1.5 Expenditure Recognition

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Support costs are those costs incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity. Governance costs are those incurred in connection with administration of the charity and compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements and are included in support costs.

Costs of raising funds are costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, and those incurred in trading activities that raise funds.

1.6 Stock

Stocks are CDs for sale and are stated at the lower of cost and estimated selling price.

1.7 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

1.8 Creditors and Provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount.

THE TELLING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

2.0 Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3.0 Income from Donations and Legacies

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Donations and gifts	-	19,444	19,444	24,534
Gift Aid	-	3,705	3,705	11,810
Grants	73,498	-	73,498	47,226
	<u>73,498</u>	<u>23,149</u>	<u>96,647</u>	<u>83,570</u>

3.1 Income from donation and legacies was £96,647 (2023 - £83,570) of which £73,498 (2023 - £51,148) was attributable to restricted funds and £23,149 (2023 - £32,422) was attributable to unrestricted funds.

THE TELLING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

3.2 Analysis of Grants	2024	2023
	£	£
Ambache Charitable Trust	-	1,000
Angel Early Music	3,000	3,000
Arts Council England	25,195	-
Colwinston Charitable Trust	6,000	-
Continuo Foundation	5,000	5,500
Grimmitt Trust	1,000	1,000
John Murray Charitable Trust	-	5,000
Margaret Davies Charity	-	3,000
Scops Arts Trust	7,500	7,500
Shoresh Charitable Trust	1,983	1,500
Sir John Fisher Foundation	7,000	4,710
Sylvia Waddilove Foundation	-	1,000
The Darkley Trust	-	1,516
The Golsoncott Foundation	1,000	1,000
The Hadfield Trust	1,500	-
The James Beattie Charitable Trust	870	-
The Marchus Trust	5,000	5,000
The Radcliffe Trust	2,000	2,500
The Souter Charity	3,000	3,000
The Victoria Wood Foundation	2,450	-
WE Dunn Trust	1,000	1,000
	<u>73,498</u>	<u>47,226</u>

4.0 *Income from Charitable Activities*

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Promoters fees	-	9,640	9,640	10,086
Box office and CD sales	-	29,780	29,780	15,460
	<u>-</u>	<u>39,420</u>	<u>39,420</u>	<u>25,446</u>

4.1 Income from charitable activities was £39,420 (2023 - £25,446) of which £nil (2023 - £nil) was attributable to restricted funds and £39,420 (2023 - £25,546) was attributable to unrestricted funds.

THE TELLING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

5.0 Analysis of Expenditure on Charitable Activities

Charitable Activities 2024	Activities undertaken directly 2024 £	Support costs 2024 £	Governance costs 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Artists	64,430	-	-	64,430
Venues	7,036	-	-	7,036
Lighting	12,324	-	-	12,324
Travel and subsistence	14,422	-	-	14,422
Marketing	9,763	350	-	10,113
Film and CD production	342	-	-	342
Project administration	27,850	-	-	27,850
Sundry expenses	2,359	-	-	2,359
Bank charges	-	614	-	614
Accountancy	-	-	4,440	4,440
	<u>138,526</u>	<u>964</u>	<u>4,440</u>	<u>143,930</u>

5.1 Charitable Activities 2023

Charitable Activities 2023	Activities undertaken directly 2023 £	Support costs 2023 £	Governance costs 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Artists	39,852	-	-	39,852
Venues	6,421	-	-	6,421
Lighting	12,171	-	-	12,571
Travel and subsistence	10,279	-	-	10,279
Marketing	4,352	-	-	4,352
Film and CD production	5,017	-	-	5,017
Project administration	22,806	-	-	22,806
Sundry expenses	1,585	-	-	1,585
	<u>102,483</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>102,483</u>

5.2 Of the £143,930 expenditure in 2024 (2023 - £102,483), £110,676 (2023 - £79,566) was attributable to restricted funds and £33,254 (2023 - £22,917) was attributable to unrestricted funds.

6.0 Net Income/(Expenditure) for the Year

	2024 £	2023 £
<i>This is stated after charging</i>		
Independent examiner's fee	<u>4,440</u>	<u>-</u>

THE TELLING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

7.0 Trustees Remuneration and Expenses

Clare Norburn resigned as a trustee on 21 September 2023. The following payments were made to her up the date of her resignation. These payments were made in respect of services provided to the charity as a performer and writer, and as authorised by the governing document and the Trustees:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Performing/writing fees	6,140	8,587
Expenses reclaimed	35	-
	<u>6,175</u>	<u>8,587</u>

No other members of the Board of Trustees received any remuneration or expenses during the year.

No trustee or other person related to the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity during the year (2023 – nil).

8.0 Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Prepayments	2,139	1,016
Accrued income	3,641	-
	<u>5,780</u>	<u>1,016</u>

9.0 Creditors: Amounts Falling Due Within One Year

	2024	2023
	£	£
Accruals	4,440	-
Deferred income	6,394	12,620
	<u>10,834</u>	<u>12,620</u>

10.0 Deferred Income

Deferred income comprises of grants received in advance and monies received in advance for performances and events occurring after the year end.

	Total
	£
Balance as at 1 April 2023	12,620
Amount released to income earned from charitable activities	(12,620)
Amount deferred in year	6,394
	<u>6,394</u>
Balance as at 31 March 2024	<u>6,394</u>

THE TELLING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

11.0 Analysis of Charitable Funds

Unrestricted Funds – Current Year

	Balance 1 Apr 23	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Transfers £	Balance 31 Mar 24 £
General funds	<u>10,870</u>	<u>62,569</u>	<u>(33,254)</u>	<u>(36,959)</u>	<u>3,226</u>

Unrestricted Funds – Previous Year

	Balance 1 Apr 22	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Transfers £	Balance 31 Mar 23 £
General funds	<u>4,365</u>	<u>32,422</u>	<u>(22,917)</u>	<u>(3,000)</u>	<u>10,870</u>

Name of unrestricted fund

Description, nature and purposes of the fund

General funds

The “free reserves” after allowing for any designated funds.

11.1 Restricted Funds – Current Year

	Balance 1 Apr 23	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Transfers £	Balance 31 Mar 24 £
Touring and project fund	<u>219</u>	<u>73,498</u>	<u>(110,676)</u>	<u>36,959</u>	<u>-</u>

Restricted Funds – Previous Year

	Balance 1 Apr 22	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Transfers £	Balance 31 Mar 23 £
Touring and project fund	<u>91</u>	<u>76,694</u>	<u>(79,566)</u>	<u>3,000</u>	<u>219</u>

Name of restricted fund

Description, nature and purposes of the fund

Touring and project fund

Funds raised specifically to deliver projects, to rehearse and tour those projects including developing audiences in places which do not otherwise access any or much touring performances

11.2 The net transfer of £36,959 (2023 - £3,000) from general funds to the restricted funds represents additional funding towards the projects.

THE TELLING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

12.0 Analysis of Net Assets Between Funds – Current Year

	Restricted Funds 2024 £	Unrestricted Funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	-	8,280	8,280
Other net current assets/(liabilities)	-	(5,054)	(5,054)
	<u>-</u>	<u>3,226</u>	<u>3,226</u>

Analysis of Net Assets Between Funds – Previous Year

	Restricted Funds 2023 £	Unrestricted Funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Cash at bank and in hand	-	22,693	22,693
Other net current assets/(liabilities)	219	(11,823)	(11,604)
	<u>219</u>	<u>10,870</u>	<u>11,089</u>

13.0 Related Party Transactions

Aside from trustee remuneration and expenses disclosed in note 7, one trustee had a close family member who had transactions with the charity during the year. The trustee's family member was paid £1,681 for designing costumes for the performers and related expenses. The trustees specifically met on Zoom to discuss the engagement and payment of the family member, at which relevant trustee was not present.

In 2023 there were no related party transactions during the year.

THE TELLING

England & Wales - Charity number 1181802

Accounts

THE TELLING
(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

Charity number: 1181802

THE TELLING
TRUSTEES REPORT AND FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS
for the YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

David Smith & Co
7 Grosvenor Gardens
Victoria
London
SW1W 0AF

THE TELLING
(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Trustees Catherine Magdalen Edis (Chair)
Elizabeth Davies
Joanne McIntosh
Clare Norburn

Charity registered number 1181802

Registered office 168 Percy Road
Twickenham, Whitton
TW2 6JF

Artistic Director Clare Norburn
General Manager Stephanie Williams

Independent examiner David C Smith
of David C Smith & Co
Accountants
7 Grosvenor Gardens
Victoria
London
SW1W 0AF

Bankers HSBC
312 Seven Sisters Road
Finsbury Park
London
N4 2AW

The Trustees (who are also directors of The Telling for the purposes of charity law), present their report, together with the independently examined financial statements for the year ending 31 March 2023. The Trustees confirm that the Report and financial statements of the Charity comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the Charity's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (Effective 1 January 2019).

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(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

TRUSTEES REPORT

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charities Commission's general guidance on public benefit. This is borne out by deliveries of activities outlined in this report, which are in line with the main objectives of The Telling and the activities to deliver against those objectives:

The main objectives of The Telling are: to advance the arts and education for the public benefit, through the promotion, support and encouragement of music, in particular by presenting historically-aware musical performances, workshops, talks and recordings using period instruments, often collaborating with other art-forms including theatre, film, dance and puppetry, to reach people who are not usually attracted to classical concerts. We:

- a) give high quality concerts and performances, including repertoire which otherwise would not be performed widely
- b) work with young people in schools and amateur singers and instrumentalists from a variety of walks of life, introducing them to new repertoire and enabling them to develop and improve their musical skills.

We perform across the UK and, alongside a series of engagements, run our own growing programme of residencies, targeting places where there is little classical or early music touring which are currently Liverpool, Barrow Peninsula/South Cumbria, Mistle/Manningtree, Folkestone, Conwy, Cardiff, SE Devon and Wolverhampton.

Music and particularly early music (from the middle ages to the late 18th century) is promoted by our organisation through live performances and recordings using voices and period instruments. We often collaborate with other art-forms including theatre, new writing, story-telling, film, dance and puppetry, to create narratives using source material, contemporary literature or newly-written "concert/plays" to demystify the music and reach people who are not usually attracted to classical concerts.

We combine music (which straddles classical/folk/world music) with new writing, readings or film. We move around audiences and use costume and lighting/candlelight. We have recently been selected for the Pitch Perfect Scheme run by The Space (the BBC and Arts Council England jointly funded organisation to support the development of digital arts and on broadcast media). This will see us receiving support in 2023 in developing work and approaching broadcasters.

We engage a pool of leading directors, actors, musicians and lighting designers from arts organisations including **BBC TV, The RSC, National Theatre, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, The Dufay Collective** and **I Fagiolini**.

"Siren-like voices... an ardour to these performances that is hard to resist." BBC Music Magazine

We have been on **BBC Radio's In Tune, Woman's Hour** and **Saturday Live** and performed for promoters including **Music at Oxford, Buxton International Festival, Lake District Summer Music, Brighton Early Music Festival, Little Missenden Festival** and **Keele Arts**. We have released three CDs – both on the **First Hand Records** label.

Our Artistic Director, Clare Norburn has devised a new genre where music and drama collide. Her concert/plays have attracted **4 star reviews** in **The Times** and **The Guardian** and performances at

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Bridgewater Hall, St George's Bristol and LSO St Lukes. The stage director we work with, **Nicholas Renton** directed Andrew Davies' BAFTA nominated **Mrs Gaskell's Wives and Daughters** for **BBC TV** and episodes of **Lewis, Musketeers, Silent Witness** and **George Gently**.

TRUSTEES

The following Trustees served the charity during the year:

Catherine Magdalen Edis (Chair)

Elizabeth Davies

Joanne McIntosh

Clare Norburn

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Telling is a charitable incorporated organisation and has no share capital. In the event of a winding up, while a Member or within one year of ceasing to be a Member, the Member's liability is limited to £5. The Telling received confirmation of its charitable status on 30 January 2019 and is governed by its Constitution.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall governance of the CIO. With the exception of the Artistic Director, Clare Norburn, the Trustees are not artists involved in the charity's work. Trustees may be appointed at the discretion, and with the approval, of the existing Trustees. New Trustees are briefed of their duties by existing Trustees.

The Telling engages musicians, actors, directors, lighting designers, costume makers and other creatives on a project by project basis. All are paid on a freelance rehearsal and concert-by-concert basis and none is a permanent employee of the charity.

The administration of the Foundation during the year was undertaken on a pro bono basis by the Artistic Director, Clare Norburn, supported by a paid freelance part-time General Manager Stephanie Williams.

REPORT: ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

This is the Trustees fourth report to the Charity Commission.

This 2022/23 financial year started as we were gearing up to a return to a pre-pandemic level of touring. Up to that point, during 2020/21 and much of 2021/22 we had been forced to transfer many activities online, working hard to maintain connections with our residency audiences around the country.

TOURING PERFORMANCES AND WORKSHOPS

Summary: 2022/23 saw us give 25 UK performances including at **Lake District Summer Music** and **Conwy Classical Music Festival, Stoke Newington Early Music Festival** and **Stroud Green Festival** – plus our first European visit to **Voci Audaci** in **Locarno**, Switzerland and a first USA screening of our *Unsung Heroine* film at **Bloomington Early Music Festival** in Indiana. We continued to fundraise and tour to our Residency places which otherwise miss out on accessing professional music and theatre touring.

Touring aims:

While we maintain a commitment to fundraise to take work to places which miss out (which means more expensive and higher risk self-promoted events) our model going forward will be to combine that funded work with paid engagements and box office split/shared risks to create a more sustainable model. This is shaping up well with confirmed engagements in 2023 and 2024 at **Bedford Music Club, Beverley Early Music Festival/NCEM, Newbury Spring Festival, The Anvil/Haymarket, Basingstoke** and box office split/shared risk eg with **JW3 Arts Centre** and **The Coro, Ulverston** (Cumbria). In addition, a second screening of our

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Into the Melting Pot film at **Bloomington Early Music Festival** in Indiana USA took place in May 2023.

The Telling's pioneering **Touring and Project fund is our key overarching programme. Within this our Residency Programme** aims to build audiences by taking performances to places that "miss out". We aim to create **equal access for low-engaged communities** in areas of **economic disadvantage, where other performing arts organisations dare not tour.**

In the 2022/23 financial year, we built audiences in the following places, which otherwise receive a limited touring offer: **Wolverhampton** (3 performances), **South Cumbria** (Ulverston and Grange-over-Sands: 3 shows), **Folkestone** (2 performances), **Lympstone** (near Exmouth) and first shows in **Conwy**, N Wales (2 performances), **Cardiff** (which has no real early music touring: 2 performances), **Mistley, near Manningtree** (3 performances; within **Tendring** local authority, which the **Arts Council** has designated as **low arts-engaged**), as well as performances in Liverpool where little early music tours.

We ran 4 touring projects which were:

1. **Into the Melting Pot:** set in 1492 in a Spanish Christian/Muslim/Jewish community, a Jewish woman (played by Suzanne Ahmet (National Theatre, Chester Storyhouse)) is forced to leave. Her story is startlingly contemporary, with resonances to Windrush, Black Lives Matter & recent antisemitism, and is played out to a soundtrack of plaintive Sephardic songs & lively Cantigas which fuse medieval & Arabic instruments/styles, making early music accessible to a wider audience. [7 performances: 25-31 July. 1-3 August, we then filmed the show at Bush, London](#)
2. **Vision:** the imagined testimony of the extraordinary medieval abbess Hildegard of Bingen (played by Teresa Banham (RSC, Shared Experience)) alongside her haunting chant. Hildegard revisits and re-experiences meaningful episodes from her past which aims to give an insight into the painful visionary experiences she suffered throughout her life, covering some of the core emotional moments, coupled with her distinctive and mesmerising chant through which she felt she can 'say the unspeakable'. [5 performances: 23 July and 4-8 August](#)
3. **Unsung Heroine:** the imagined life and love of the redoubtable troubadour Countess Beatriz de Dia (played by Leila Mimmack (*Lewis, Doctors, Silent Witness*)) soundtracked by the plaintive music of the troubadours and lively medieval dances. The story imagines how Beatriz came to write her impassioned song 'A Chantar', the only troubadour song by a woman where both the poetry and melody have survived. Beatriz's poetry is grounded in the rules of courtly love. She lives in a world where emotions are sacrificed to the straitjacket of ritual: her only recourse is to channel her pain, love and desire for revenge into this passionate song. [5 shows: 13-18 Sept 2022](#)

All 3 shows were directed by Nicholas Renton (BAFTA-nominated *Mrs Gaskell's Wives and Daughters, Musketeers, A Room With A View, Lewis, Silent Witness*) and written by singer/playwright, Clare Norburn.

4. In addition, we ran a 5-date candlelit **Carol tour** which we performed around England and Wales, alongside live workshops, online workshops and an online Advent calendar of short films of carols. This is just some of the audience feedback questionnaire responses we received:

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"Extremely relaxing, I felt transported"

"The taking part (workshop) was really appreciated – well worth attending"

"Very different experience. Fabulous quality/singing. Loved the moving around the church, especially by candlelight"

"It's a good performance of live music and a genre I was not familiar with – very enjoyable"

"Really accessible and the storytelling/introducing the pieces makes it interesting"



5. We also gave several one off performances and workshops at Stroud Green Festival, Stoke Newington Early Music Festival and for Voci Audaci Festival in Locarno in Switzerland.

LIVE WORKSHOPS: We also delivered our first **live workshop sessions** since the pandemic. 2022/23 saw a return to our distinctive model of delivering 45 minute live workshops before concerts for all comers, targeted at "Community Choir level" with no need to read music. These workshops take place a little ahead of a concert, enabling participants to join us in performing a few numbers either during the concert from their seats or often at the start of the second half. We delivered 8 live workshops as part of our Into the Melting Pot and Carol tours. The workshops were free for concert ticket holders.

ONLINE SINGING WORKSHOPS: We continued our singing workshops on Zoom with 2 one-off online singing workshops and two 4 session series by Clare Norburn – 10 in total. This enabled our online community, which we had developed and got to know very well during weekly workshops for over a year starting during the first week of lockdown. These online sessions enabled us to continue to connect with this online audience who are across the audience from Devon to Glasgow and to give them a sense of our online touring. We delivered a 4 week carol series and a 4 week Songs by and about Medieval woman series around International Women's Day 2023. Both continued to receive interest of 30 regular participants.

Other achievements:

We also created an **arthouse film** version of *Into the Melting Pot* to complete the *Empowered Women Trilogy* film series, filmed to camera with direction at Bush Hall, London, drawing upon a week of touring to strengthen the filmed performances. The film was released through our website, at the price of £5.99. You can watch the film via this private link on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/O6WBCRBZ64A> Beyond the 2022/23 financial year, the film went on to be screened at the Bloomington Early Music Festival in May 2023 (following a well-received screening of our *Unsung heroine* film in May 2022).

The Telling was the **only UK ensemble** to be shortlisted for **two REMA European Early Music Awards in November 2022**.

Towards the end of the year Clare Norburn was selected to the final round of a scheme run by The Space's (funded by ACE and the BBC) to be supported towards a broadcast commission (not guaranteed) of a potential radio adaptation of our 2021 Zoom play with music: ***Love in the Lockdown***.

The numbers we reached: the tour saw us **taking early music to 2428 people in places which rarely receive live early music performances** including Wolverhampton, Ulverston, Mistley (Essex), Folkestone and Lympstone (Devon) as well as Lewes and Stroud Green in North London. **We worked with 124 live workshop participants:** and **49 online workshop participants**.

The audience numbers are lower than we had expected per show and lower than achieved in our *I, Spie* tour in October 2021 and that we have subsequently achieved in 2023/24, when we have seen an increase in

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ticket sales.

Feedback:

We continued to receive moving feedback from workshop participants and the public about our work, as exemplified by this email after a performance of *Into the Melting Pot* from an audience member who works with refugees:

"Last night's performance was so utterly moving - a human story brought to life by The Telling. Professionals of the highest order. I have been struggling for years to tell my late mother's story as a Jewish Kindertransport child coming from Germany in 1939 ... But your creation was a collaborative wondrous experience that touched every part of my being. Each one of you worked as superb musician, singer, instrumentalist, actor together to make something whole and transformative."

This is just some audience feedback questionnaire responses we received:

"powerful and engaging: an excellent blend of historical music and theatre"

"Absolutely wonderful. Truly moving. Heartfelt thanks and congratulations."

"The whole thing worked really well together - the storytelling/acting & music"

"The passion of Blanca, the singing - all a joy/privilege to witness"

"It was a beautiful experience - it lets you get away from stress and lose yourself"

Marketing and Press coverage

In each location we developed partnerships that helped us reach local audiences - for example in Folkestone we worked with the Artistic Director of now closed Folkestone Early Music who shared details with her mailing list and also suggested places to distribute leaflets round town. We also set up reciprocal marketing partnerships with local arts organisations at each of our tour locations, asking for their help in spreading the word and offering to return the favour.

Following the success of our digital marketing strategy in our previous tour in October 2021, led by guidance from the **Arts Council/BBC The Space's Digital Marketing Mentoring scheme**, we had another successful Facebook Ads campaign; 38% of audience members who filled in the feedback questionnaire said they discovered the event through Facebook. This in combination with reciprocal marketing with partners and a flyer distribution plan on the ground worked strongly together.

We also worked hard to secure local press coverage securing **6 local BBC Radio** interviews (**BBC Shropshire, BBC Cumbria, BBC West Midlands, BBC Essex, BBC Sussex and BBC Merseyside**).

Also, the musicians on our *Into the Melting Pot* show were interviewed and performed on **BBC Radio 3's In Tune** on 22 July 2022.

Clare Norburn was also a special guest in BBC Radio 4's **Add to Playlist** with **Cerys Matthews and Jeffrey Boakye** in November 2022, talking about Hildegard of Bingen.

SHARING OUR LEARNING WITH OTHER ENSEMBLES AND COMPANIES

Given The Telling has an interesting formula for developing residencies in areas where there is little or no early music touring, we put together a training session in spring 2022 to share our learning (both successes and failures) so others could benefit from our learning and explore how to tour and develop residencies themselves. **39 people attended or subsequently downloaded the recording of the training session.** We provided a powerpoint with a toolkit which was selected as a shortlisted project for the **REMA European Early Music Awards in autumn 2022.**

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MANAGEMENT

Managerially, our Artistic Director, Clare Norburn continued in her role as Artistic Director on a pro bono basis, supported by our General Manager Stephanie Williams. This management team, together with a focused and dedicated board of trustees, has continued the strengthening of the organisation with tight controls over all aspects of planning, including deciding on repertoire for programmes, scheduling, budgeting, and monitoring of financial forecasts.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

2022/23 proved challenging financially in terms of ticket sales and a lack of a grant from The Arts Council, but rich artistically. Despite the financial challenges we achieved a surplus at the end of the year was £6,633, which, gives a balance carried forward on reserves of £11,089. As the 2022/23 financial year covers the entire first year of a return to pre-pandemic levels of touring, we saw a large increase in total income and expenditure for the financial year ending 31 March 2023 in comparison with 31 March 2022 (income £68,101 and expenditure £61,125). The challenge we faced was that ticket income was much lower than expected.

This perfect storm of rising costs and reduced ticket income has been faced by the entire artistic sector and smaller organisations like The Telling have faced a particular challenge. We have not had the high net worth connections that other larger arts charities enjoy and so have had to fight hard to keep fundraising. Applications to Arts Council England between April 2020 and March 2023 were all unsuccessful, despite an unbroken track record of successful applications up to and including April 2020.

In this challenging context, The Telling is most grateful to the individuals and organisations who supported the charity during the year. Without them we would never have been able to go ahead with our projects and touring programme during 2022/23. For a small organisation to have raised £47,226 from trusts in such a challenging context shows the importance and distinctiveness of our work and our ability to articulate that importance and to fundraise.

All our funding has been toward aspects of our **Touring and Project Fund** to enable us to take performances, workshops around England, with a focus on places that miss out in being able to access most touring circuits:

Ambache Charitable Trust	1000
Angel Early Music	3000
Continuo Foundation	5500
Grimmitt Trust	1000
John Murray Charitable Trust	5000
Margaret Davies Charity	3000
Scops Arts Trust	7500
Shoresh Charitable Trust	1500
Sir John Fisher Foundation*	4710
Sylvia Waddilove Foundation	1000
The Darkley Trust	1516
The Golsoncottt Foundation	1000
The Marchus Trust	5000
The Radcliffe Trust	2500
The Souter Charity	3000
WE Dunn Trust	1000
	<u>47,226</u>

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*NB We received £8500 from **Sir John Fisher Foundation** at the start of lockdown. They are a Trust based on the Furness peninsula, and the grant is for work in South Cumbria. We could not undertake this work during the 2020/21 financial year because of the lockdowns. We started this work in autumn 2021, having drawn down £3,790 and deferring the remaining £4,710 of the grant which has now been fully expended in the 2022/23 financial year over 3 further Cumbrian performances.

The Trustees are acutely aware that, as a growing organisation, much more needs to be done in the ensuing years to increase The Telling's reserves with a target to have reserves equivalent to running costs for a 3-month period by 2023 and 6 months by 2025. This has been challenging to bring about because of the pandemic. Looking ahead, the trustees are determined to avoid any significant loss-making ventures and keep the charity in surplus.

The administration of the Foundation during the period was undertaken on a pro bono basis by the Artistic Director, Clare Norburn. She is supported by our freelance General Manager, Stephanie Williams whose important skills, particularly in editing and managing online content, have been instrumental in ensuring The Telling has been agile and able to adapt our work quickly and efficiently.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

At time of writing we are well into plans for 2023/24 and have seen an encouraging pick up of audience attendance and interest from promoters to take us forward into the future. This includes a growing percentage of bookings from promoters which is proving important to continue in order to ease the strain on our entire reliance for trust and foundation support. However, the nature of the work we and our commitment to tour places which miss out and where there is little infrastructure means we will continue to rely on funding from trust and individuals to deliver this element of our touring programme and also to underpin rehearsal and development cost for new projects: the blend of music and theatre needing significantly more rehearsal than a standard concert requires.

Having been encouraged by recognition of Clare Norburn's concertplay format by contacts within the BBC and The Space, continuing to seek opportunities for broadcasts for Clare and The Telling's work continues to remain a priority. In October 2023, Clare won the 2023 Colin Skipp Memorial Cup for Radio Playwriting organized by Arts Richmond, which recognizes that the work Clare and The Telling is doing is important. In March 2024, BBC Radio 3's The Early Music Show will run an hour long feature celebrating the Telling's 15th anniversary and pioneering work to celebrate medieval women and women composers as part of their International women's Day celebrations.

In response to the risks and challenges outlined overleaf under the heading **Assessment of Major Risks**, we are now planning activities for summer and autumn tours in 2024 and 2025.

To fund future activities, the Artistic Director and General Manager will continue to apply for grants from grant-making organisations whose priorities and goals are shared by The Telling. The organisation will continue to run appeals to underpin projects.

ASSESSMENT OF MAJOR RISKS

The Trustees have considered risks to which The Telling is exposed and have established appropriate procedures to mitigate the impact of those risks.

The outlook for the 2023/24 financial year and beyond continues to be a challenging one. The main difficulty faced by The Telling and all other arts organisations is a perfect storm of rising costs, combined with the cost-of-living also impacting significantly on ticket sale income and making promoters risk-averse. However we have learnt much about the challenges ahead which are likely to remain:

THE TELLING

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

- a) A need for enhanced funding to mitigate losses due to fewer promoter engagements, reduced fees from promoters and reduced ticket income from self-promoted events
- b) A climate in which competition for funds is fiercer than ever

Our future plans above detail how we have already made changes to the model of our work to involve more paid engagements alongside fundraising for our more risky residencies/self-promotions, which depend on ticket income. The increase in paid engagements will mitigate the risk, alongside plans to continue to build our fundraising, which already increased by nearly 50% between the financial years 2021/22 and 2022/23.

TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The Charities Act requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. The Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION TO INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' Report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant accounting information of which the charity's independent examiner is unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant information and to establish that the charity's independent examiner is aware of that information.

In preparing this report, the Trustees have taken advantage of the small charity exemptions provided by the SORP and FRS102.

This report was approved by the Trustees, on *29-1-24* and signed on their behalf by



Catherine Magdalen Edis

Chair of Trustees

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The Telling

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The Telling ('the charitable incorporated organization') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and related notes.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for my work, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of a charitable incorporated organization, you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the charity are not required to be audited and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 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 2011 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:

- i. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- ii. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
- iii. the financial statements do not comply with the applicable concerning the form and content of financial statements set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the financial statements give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination

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 financial statements to be reached.



David C Smith for
David Smith & Co
7 Grosvenor Gardens
Victoria
London
SW1W 0AF

Date: 30th January 2024

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £
<u>Income</u>						
Donations						
Donations and gifts	20,612	3,922	24,534	3,869	17,821	21,690
Grants		47,226	47,226	15,000	14,120	29,120
Gift Aid Tax recovered	11,810	-	11,810			
Charitable activities						
Promoters Fees	-	10,086	10,086	361	7,588	7,949
Box Office & CD Sales		15,460	15,460	3,297	6,045	9,342
Royalties	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total income	<u>32,422</u>	<u>76,694</u>	<u>109,116</u>	<u>22,527</u>	<u>45,574</u>	<u>68,101</u>
<u>Expenditure</u>						
Charitable activities						
Artists		39,852	39,852	160	25,495	25,655
Venues	-	6,421	6,421	-	2,718	2,718
Lighting	-	12,171	12,171	-	3,451	3,451
Project sundries	82	1,503	1,585	23	490	513
Travel and subsistence	-	10,279	10,279	-	4,526	4,526
Marketing	29	4,323	4,352	549	2,776	3,325
Film and CD production	-	5,017	5,017	104	4,697	4,801
Project administration	22,806	-	22,806	10,944	5,192	16,136
	<u>22,917</u>	<u>79,566</u>	<u>102,483</u>	<u>11,780</u>	<u>49,345</u>	<u>61,125</u>
Other charitable costs						
General marketing	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total charitable expenditure	<u>22,917</u>	<u>79,566</u>	<u>102,483</u>	<u>11,780</u>	<u>49,345</u>	<u>61,125</u>
Excess of income over expenditure	9,505	(2,872)	6,633	10,747	(3,771)	6,976
Transfer between funds	(3,000)	3,000	-	(8,600)	8,600	-
Net movement in Funds	6,505	128	6,633	2,147	4,829	6,976
Total Funds brought forward	4,365	91	4,456	2,218	(4,738)	(2,520)
Total Funds carried forward	<u>10,870</u>	<u>219</u>	<u>11,089</u>	<u>4,365</u>	<u>91</u>	<u>4,456</u>

The notes on pages 14 -16 form part of these financial statements.

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	<u>2023</u>		<u>2022</u>	
	£	£	£	£
Current assets				
Stock of CDs	-	-	-	-
Debtors	1,016		356	
Cash at bank and in hand	22,693		16,310	
		23,709		16,666
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		(12,620)		(12,210)
Net current assets		11,089		4,456
Funds				
Restricted funds		219		91
Unrestricted funds		10,870		4,365
		11,089		4,456

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small charity's regime.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on 29.1.24 and signed on their behalf by:



Catherine Magdalen Edis
Chair of Trustees

THE TELLING
(A Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1. Accounting policies

1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act.

The Telling meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognized at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

1.2 Going Concern

The charity is mainly reliant upon donations and grant income to raise revenue to meet future expenditure. The Trustees consider that it is appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. This assumes that the charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) will be successful in its fundraising activities. The financial statements do not include any adjustments that would result if insufficient funds are raised. In formulating this assessment the Trustees have taken into consideration the impact of the global cost of living crisis on the charity's ability to raise funds.

1.3 Organisation Status

The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The members of the CIO are the Trustees named on page 1. In the event of the CIO being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £5 per Trustee.

The registered address is 60 Lancaster Road, London N4 4PT

1.4 Income

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

Donated services and facilities, including gifts in kind, are included at the value to the Charity where this can be quantified and a third party is bearing the cost. No amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers.

Donations received with imposed restrictions are classified as restricted funds.

Revenue grants are credited as incoming resources when they are receivable provided conditions for receipt have been complied with. Where grants awarded for specific concerts or events are received in advance of the performance, they are deferred so that concert and event costs align with related income.

Concert and event income is recognized in the period in which the performance takes place.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognized once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Support costs are those costs incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the Charity. Governance costs are those incurred in connection with administration of the Charity and compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements and are included in support costs.

Costs of raising funds are costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, and those incurred in trading activities that raise funds.

1.6 Stocks

Stocks are CDs for sale and are stated at the lower of cost and estimated selling price.

1.7 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

1.8 Creditors and provisions

Liabilities are recognized when there is an obligation at the Balance Sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Liabilities are recognized at the amount that the Charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide. Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation.

Trade and other creditors are recognized at the settlement amount after any trade discounts received. Accruals are valued based on the estimated amount to be paid.

1.9 Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognized at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortized cost using the effective interest method.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.10 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

2. Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognized in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3. Income and Expenditure

Details of the income and expenditure are shown on the Statement of Financial Activities (page 12). The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognized in the year. All Income and Expenditure is derived from continuing activities.

4. Trustees' remuneration and benefits

The following payments were made to Clare Norburn in the year. These payments were made in respect of services provided to the charity as a performer, and as authorized by the governing document and the Trustees:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Performing/writing fees	8,587	4,120
Expenses reclaimed (travel, postage etc)	-	438

THE TELLING

England & Wales - Charity number 1181802

Accounts

THE TELLING
(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

Charity number: 1181802

THE TELLING
TRUSTEES REPORT AND FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS
for the YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

David Smith & Co
7 Grosvenor Gardens
Victoria
London
SW1W 0AF

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**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION,
ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

Trustees	Catherine Magdalen Edis (Chair) Elizabeth Davies Joanne McIntosh Clare Ross (stage name: Clare Norburn)
Charity registered number	1181802
Registered office	60 Lancaster Road London N4 4PT
Artistic Director General Manager	Clare Norburn Stephanie Williams
Independent examiner	David C Smith of David C Smith & Co Chartered Accountants 7 Grosvenor Gardens Victoria London SW1W 0AF
Bankers	HSBC 312 Seven Sisters Road Finsbury Park London N4 2AW

The Trustees (who are also directors of The Telling for the purposes of charity law), present their report, together with the independently examined financial statements for the year ending 31 March 2022. The Trustees confirm that the Report and financial statements of the Charity comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the Charity's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (Effective 1 January 2019).

THE TELLING

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TRUSTEES REPORT

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charities Commission's general guidance on public benefit. This is borne out by deliveries of activities outlined in this report, which are in line with the main objectives of The Telling and the activities to deliver against those objectives:

The main objectives of The Telling are: to advance the arts and education for the public benefit, through the promotion, support and encouragement of music, in particular by presenting historically-aware musical performances, workshops, talks and recordings using period instruments, often collaborating with other art-forms including theatre, film, dance and puppetry, to reach people who are not usually attracted to classical concerts. We:

a) give high quality concerts and performances, including repertoire which otherwise would not be performed widely

b) work with young people in schools and amateur singers and instrumentalists from a variety of walks of life, introducing them to new repertoire and enabling them to develop and improve their musical skills.

We perform across the UK and, alongside a series of engagements, run our own growing programme of residencies, targeting places where there is little classical or early music touring which are currently Liverpool, Barrow Peninsula/South Cumbria, Mistley/Manningtree, Folkestone, Conwy, Cardiff, SE Devon and Wolverhampton.

Music and particularly early music (from the middle ages to the late 18th century) is promoted by our organisation through live performances and recordings using voices and period instruments. We often collaborate with other art-forms including theatre, new writing, story-telling, film, dance and puppetry, to create narratives using source material, contemporary literature or newly-written "concert/plays" to demystify the music and reach people who are not usually attracted to classical concerts.

We combine music (which straddles classical/folk/world music) with new writing, readings or film. We move around audiences and use costume and lighting/candlelight. We have recently been selected for the Pitch Perfect Scheme run by The Space (the BBC and Arts Council England jointly funded organisation to support the development of digital arts and on broadcast media). This will see us receiving support in 2023 in developing work and approaching broadcasters.

We engage a pool of leading directors, actors, musicians and lighting designers from arts organisations including **BBC TV, The RSC, National Theatre, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, The Dufay Collective** and **I Fagiolini**.

"Siren-like voices... an ardour to these performances that is hard to resist." BBC Music Magazine

We have been on **BBC Radio's In Tune, Woman's Hour** and **Saturday Live** and performed for promoters including **Music at Oxford, Buxton International Festival, Lake District Summer Music, Brighton Early Music Festival, Little Missenden Festival** and **Keele Arts**. We have released three CDs – both on the **First Hand Records** label.

Our Artistic Director, Clare Norburn has devised a new genre where music and drama collide. Her concert/plays have attracted **4 star reviews** in **The Times** and **The Guardian** and performances at **Bridgewater Hall, St George's Bristol** and **LSO St Lukes**. The stage director we work with, **Nicholas Renton** directed Andrew Davies' BAFTA nominated **Mrs Gaskell's Wives and Daughters** for **BBC TV** and episodes of **Lewis, Musketeers, Silent Witness** and **George Gently**.

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TRUSTEES

The following Trustees served the charity during the year:

Catherine Magdalen Edis (Chair)
Elizabeth Davies
Joanne McIntosh
Clare Ross (stage name: Clare Norburn)

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Telling is a charitable incorporated organisation and has no share capital. In the event of a winding up, while a Member or within one year of ceasing to be a Member, the Member's liability is limited to £5. The Telling received confirmation of its charitable status on 30 January 2019 and is governed by its Constitution.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall governance of the CIO. With the exception of the Artistic Director, Clare Norburn, the Trustees are not artists involved in the charity's work. Trustees may be appointed at the discretion, and with the approval, of the existing Trustees. New Trustees are briefed of their duties by existing Trustees.

The Telling engages musicians, actors, directors, lighting designers, costume makers and other creatives on a project by project basis. All are paid on a freelance rehearsal and concert-by-concert basis and none is a permanent employee of the charity.

The administration of the Foundation during the year was undertaken on a pro bono basis by the Artistic Director, Clare Norburn.

REPORT: ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

This is the Trustees third report to the Charity Commission.

This financial year started as we were still in lockdown. The Telling had been able to continue to build upon successes in pre-pandemic 2019/20 (28 live performances) and during 2020/21 had transferred many activities online, working hard to maintain connections with our residency audiences around the country.

By the start of the 2021/22 financial year in April 2021, we had completed our Arts Council England's Emergency Response fund grant and were just at the end of completing filming and editing of the final project in our *HomeTour* online programme: *Love in the Lockdown*. Again, The Telling was able to respond agilely in response to restriction.

SINGING WORKSHOPS

We were also continuing our weekly singing workshops on Zoom led by our mezzo Ariane Prüssner, which were largely self-funding. We started the year with a programme of "women in early music" workshops which was due to go up to midsummer 2021.

"Thank you so much for all you are doing during this time of Covid. I am a regular participant in the In Retreat sessions and love the concerts/films too. I thought Vision in particular was absolutely stunning."

"The Telling has been a lifeline"

"I have hated being in lockdown but I realise that without it, I would never have come across your wonderful medieval music and the really enjoyable workshops so I guess it is true that every cloud has a silver lining"

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silver lining!"

We had planned to reduce from weekly sessions from summer 2021 to more occasional sessions but that was pre-empted by the sudden death of Ariane in May 2021. Since then we have continued to put on short courses of online singing workshops – including a Carol mini course in December 2021 led by Clare Norburn.

CELEBRATING ARIANE PRÜSSNER

In May 2021 we were devastated by the **sudden death of our wonderful mezzo Ariane Prüssner** from undiagnosed lung cancer. As a result, our In Retreat singing series came to a sudden halt in May. It is part of her extraordinary singing ability and resilience and how much she loved giving the workshops that she carried on singing right to her last – giving her last workshop 10 days before her death and passionately wanting to carry on singing and teaching.

Ariane had provided such important relief to so many of our ***In Retreat*** singing workshop participants as a steady and calm presence throughout the lockdown. She had also been a hugely important performer in the Telling in nearly all of our live concerts and shows and three of our online films. She was, and still is, sorely missed. We are blessed that she was part of The Telling and we are lucky to have so much of her legacy on film which we can continue to share. We marked Ariane's death with a tribute at the end of the final 3 episodes of ***Love in the Lockdown*** which included her final recording: a stunning solo a cappella rendition of ***Lucente Stella*** (from the Rossi Codex). We also fundraised to be able to **release an album** of the soundtrack of the two films of ***Vision*** and ***Unsung Heroine*** in her memory, so that her music was able to be kept alive. Jean Kelly and Clare Norburn also gave a memorial concert celebrating her life, which included streaming of some of her most beautiful recordings.

LOVE IN THE LOCKDOWN



Our Artistic Director wrote ***Love in the Lockdown*** which we filmed in February and March 2021 and had started to release from 4 March 2021. The final 5 episodes were released from April to 20 May 2021 within this financial year.

An online play with music, starring acclaimed actors **Alec Newman** and **Rachael Stirling**, it was rehearsed and filmed entirely over Zoom or on actor and musicians' mobiles/recording devices from their own homes. The action and music took place over 9 episodes, which were released in real time on YouTube, on the first anniversary of the key moments at the start of the lockdown from 4 March till 20 May 2021. ***Love in the Lockdown*** told the story of two lovers separated by the lockdown at work on an updated version of Boccaccio's ***The Decameron*** which was a kind of box-set to while away quarantine during the 1348 Black Death!

The series was shortlisted in 6 categories for the SceneSaver online theatre awards, with **Nicholas Renton** winning Best Director.

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"an exploration of the boundaries between art and life...intelligent... does more than reflect overfamiliar pandemic situations back at us... it finds new terrain" Arifa Akbar, The Guardian

The drama, directed by **Nicholas Renton** (BAFTA-nominated *Mrs Gaskell's Wives and Daughters, Musketeers, A Room With A View, Lewis, Silent Witness*), follows medieval musician Emilia (Stirling) and playwright Giovanni (Newman) in the early stages of an intense relationship, which starts with awkward early Zoom dates just before lockdown. Each short episode will be streamed in real time on the anniversary of some of the key points in Lockdown 1.0. Comedian, Impressionist and **Actor Jon Culshaw** has a cameo as the voice of Boris Johnson in episode 3.

Over 3 months, the separated lovers get closer. They also work on a project together, inspired by **The Decameron** by Boccaccio, a "14th Century box set" of 100 stories told by young people to while away their quarantine during the Black Death in Florence in 1348. Giovanni reimagines this work, drawing out parallels with the COVID-19 pandemic, while Emilia and her ensemble, played by real medieval music group **The Telling**, plan the music. However, their relationship ultimately gets tested and the challenges they face lead them on a soul-searching journey to discover their artistic truth.

Music performed by **The Telling** was from the 14th century by Guillaume de Machaut, Johannes Ciconia, Francesco Landini, Gherardello da Firenze and anon.

Rachael Stirling wrote about the piece:

"Clare's beautiful piece dramatises a lockdown experience of a live musician with the generous, funny and painful insight of her first-hand experience. She has written a drama for every creative who was told to retrain."

Love in the Lockdown secured major reviews/coverage including in The Times, Daily Mail and The Guardian. In particular, The Guardian review by Arifa Akbar had a strong positive reaction to the piece:

"emotional subtlety.... this moreish serial drama finds new terrain with excellent performances from Rachael Stirling and Alec Newman"

"this intelligent Zoom performance does more than reflect overfamiliar pandemic situations back at us.... it finds new terrain."

"this is theatre that mimics the format of a TV show"

"The couple's conversational eddies and undercurrents exert a gentle pull and the series becomes moreish precisely because it is so gentle. Stirling and Newman are understatedly excellent and their characters feel real."

"five episodes in, it shows signs of developing into an exploration of the boundaries between art and life"

"the music is like a celestial pause between acts"

"The relationship is drawn with emotional subtlety; Stirling and Newman are good at expressing vulnerability or romantic hope"

We also had three recommendations in The Sunday Times and these other 4 and 5 star reviews:

★★★★★ "as least as appealing as Tennant & Sheen in the BBC's Staged" PocketSizeBlog

★★★★★"charming...already a little hooked" Patrick Marmion in **The Daily Mail**

★★★★★"There have been plenty of Zoom plays over this year of lockdown, but perhaps none so classy and assured as Clare Norburn's episodic series" @thereviewshub

"music is absolutely beautiful" @loureviewsblog

"virtual format we've not seen before" @westendbf

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I, SPIE

We rehearsed and toured a new concertplay by Clare Norburn, taking 6 performances across England in October 2021. We also filmed one of the performances and edited together a film for release on Brighton Early Music Festival's BREMF@home series which is available on demand on their Facebook and Youtube channels until 31 December 2021. We hope to do a further and longer tour in 2024.



The Telling musicians for I, Spie: Emily Baines (recorder), Giles Lewin (violin), Alison Kinder (viol), Clare Norburn (soprano) and Jamie Akers (lute) –with Danny Webb (actor) in the background– dress rehearsal at Stroud Green, North London October 2021

The numbers we reached: The tour saw us taking early music to places which never or rarely receive live early music performances including: Grange-over-Sands in Cumbria, Liverpool and Wolverhampton. 530 people bought tickets to see the show live, which slightly exceeded our ticket sale targets. From everything we heard from colleagues at the time, exceeding or even achieving ticket sale targets was rarely happening across concerts and theatre post-pandemic. So this was a testament to the loyalty of our audiences and the interest in the project. The performances in Brighton and Wolverhampton sold out and in Cumbria, where we had never done anything before and where there is no regular early music touring, we attracted an audience of 90 people. The film had 680 views (232 on Youtube and 448 on Facebook). So overall 1220 people saw the show, either live or online.

Who was involved?

I, Spie was directed by Nicholas Renton (BAFTA-nominated *Mrs Gaskell's Wives and Daughters*, *Musketeers*, *A Room With A View*, *Lewis*, *Silent Witness*) and written by singer and playwright, Clare Norburn. The music comprised consort pieces and lute songs by Dowland, alongside Elizabethan tavern, street and courtly masque music by his contemporaries including Holborne, Campion and Ravenscroft. The line up was for 3 actors and 5 musicians:

Emily Baines, recorders/bagpipes/voice
Giles Lewin, fiddle/bagpipes/voice
Alison Kinder, viols/recorders/voice
Jamie Akers, lute/cittern
Clare Norburn, soprano/tambourine
Dominic Marsh as John Dowland
Danny Webb as The Man (Sir Robert Cecil / Philippes / Father Scudamore / Topcliffe, the torturer)
Alice Imelda as The Woman (Maria / Future Mrs Dowland / Elizabeth I)
Directed by Nicholas Renton
Written & produced by Clare Norburn
Lighting Designer Natalie Rowland

The concept of the show is centred around an extraordinary letter which Dowland wrote to spymaster Sir Robert Cecil in 1595. At the time, Dowland was travelling Europe, having taken umbrage in having not secured a court post as a lutenist when one fell vacant. Cecil had signed Dowland's travel papers and probably told him to "keep his eyes and ears open". So when, as a Catholic Englishman, Dowland is approached by English ex-Pats living in Florence and Rome, who are plotting to overthrow Queen Elizabeth I, Dowland dishes up the information on the plot and key players to Cecil. *I, Spie* imagines the gaps in what we know about Dowland's life at that time – what led to the moment of his writing that letter - but also what happened in the aftermath.

Being a Catholic informant in Elizabethan England was a dangerous business – no one entirely trusted you, even if your information was helpful. The 1580s has seen a series of Catholic plots and the terrifying threat of the Spanish Armada – and with the Queen ageing without any clear succession, by 1595 there was a febrile sense of panic and suspicion. In that context, it is no wonder that Dowland's letter reads like a man out of his depths: he sounds scared for his own life - and with good reason. Catholics who informed were not always fully trusted - many ended

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In each location we developed partnerships which helped us reach local audiences - for example in Cumbria we worked with our venue, **Victoria Hall in Grange-over-Sands** who advised on where to advertise, as well as other classical music promoters in the area, **Lake District Summer Music** (who went on to book us for August 2022 as a result) and **Ulverston Festival** who shared information about the performance with their following and we will return the favour ahead of their next performances.

Marketing and Press coverage

We also benefitted enormously from mentoring on the **Arts Council/BBC The Space's Digital Marketing Mentoring scheme**. The Telling was the **only classical music charity** to be selected as one of 13 English arts organisations on: alongside **Matthew Bourne's New Adventures** and **Leeds City of Culture 2023!** We benefitted from 3 months of advice on digital marketing which hugely impacted on our I, Spie tour- particularly we learnt how to refine use of Facebook ads which we used to drive interest to Facebook events set up for each location on our tour. This, in combination with reciprocal marketing with partners a flyer distribution plan on the ground worked strongly together.



Dominic Marsh as Dowland with The Telling musicians – photo Robert Piwko

We also worked hard to secure local press coverage securing **4 local BBC Radio** interviews (**BBC Shropshire, BBC Cumbria, BBC West Midlands and BBC Merseyside**).

Clare Norburn and Jamie Akers appeared and were interviewed on **BBC Radio 4's Front Row** on 18 October: The show has a **listenership of 2.2million each week** (source: BBC Media Centre press release 2017).

SHARING OUR LEARNING WITH OTHER ENSEMBLES AND COMPANIES

We are aware that we were one of the first small groups out there touring since the pandemic. Given we have an interesting formula for developing residencies in areas where there is little or no early music touring, we put together a training session on 27 January 2022 to share our learning (both successes and failures) so others could benefit from our learning and explore how to tour and develop residencies themselves. **39 people attended or subsequently downloaded the recording of the training session**. We provided a powerpoint with a toolkit which was subsequently selected as a shortlisted project for the **REMA European Early Music Awards**.

MANAGEMENT

Managerially, our Artistic Director, Clare Norburn continued in her role supported by our General Manager Stephanie Williams. This management team, together with a focused and dedicated board of trustees, has continued the strengthening of the organisation with tight controls over all aspects of planning, including deciding on repertoire for programmes, scheduling, budgeting, and monitoring of financial forecasts.

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FINANCIAL REVIEW

The surplus at the end of the year was £6,976, which, after deducting the small deficit from the previous year gives a balance carried forward on reserves of £4,456. The 2020/21 financial year covers the entire first year of the pandemic and series of lockdowns which significantly restricted activities and so reduced both our income and expenditure accordingly. The accounts for the difference between the total income and expenditure for the financial year ending 31 March 2021 (respectively £40,582 and £43,723) and this financial year to 31 March 2022 (respectively £68,101 and £61,125). The year to 31 March 2022 is much closer to the 2019/2020 financial year, as we were able to undertake one tour, whereas in 2020/21, we were unable to tour at all.

The Telling is most grateful to the individuals and organisations who supported The Telling during the year to enable our online programme during 2021/22 including

- **Angel Early Music:** £2000 for the *I, Spie* project and tour
- **Continuo Foundation;** £8000 for the *I, Spie* project and tour
- **Esmee Fairbairn Foundation** (Trustee's Areas of Specialist Knowledge (TASK) Fund) £5000
- **Garfield Weston Foundation** £10,000 towards core costs
- **Crowdfunders** and **individuals** who supported two appeals:
 - for our CD of Vision and Unsung Heroine in memory of Ariane Prüssner
 - for our *I, Spie* tour

In addition to this fundraised income, we received £8500 from **Sir John Fisher Foundation** just at the start of lockdown. They are a Trust based on the Furness peninsula, and the grant is for work in South Cumbria. We could not undertake this work during the 2020/21 financial year because of the lockdowns. We started this in October 2021 with our *I, Spie* tour which was well attended and drew down £3790 for this, deferring the remaining £4710 which has been fully expended in the following 2022/23 financial year with 3 further Cumbrian performances.

The Trustees are acutely aware that, in these still-early years of operation, much more needs to be done in the ensuing years to increase The Telling's reserves with a target to have reserves equivalent to running costs for a 3-month period by 2023 and 6 months by 2025. This has been challenging to bring about because of the pandemic. Looking ahead, the trustees are determined to avoid any significant loss-making ventures and keep the charity in surplus.

The administration of the Foundation during the period was undertaken on a pro bono basis by the Artistic Director, Clare Norburn. She is supported by our freelance General Manager, Stephanie Williams whose important skills, particularly in editing and managing online content, have been instrumental in ensuring The Telling has been agile and able to adapt our work quickly and efficiently.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

In response to the risks and challenges outlined overleaf under the heading **Assessment of Major Risks**, we are now planning activities for summer and autumn tours in 2023 and a new project for late autumn 2023. 2022/23 proved challenging financially, but rich artistically with 28 UK performances including at Lake District Summer Music and Conwy Classical Music Festival and Stroud Green Festival – and our first European visit to Voci Audaci in Locarno, Switzerland and a first screening on our Unsung Heroine film at Bloomington Early Music Festival in Indiana, USA. Carol workshops and concerts have sold well and are cheaper to put on and so a carol tour will remain an important part of our strategy for the foreseeable future. While we maintain a commitment to fundraise to take work to places which miss out (which means more expensive and higher risk self-promoted events) our model going forward will be to combine that funded work with paid engagements and box office split/shared risks to create a more sustainable model. This is shaping up well with confirmed and likely engagements in 2023 and 2024 at Bedford Music Club, Harris Music Club (Preston) and Beverley Early Music Festival (2024), and box office split/shared risk with JW3

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Arts Centre and Oso Arts Centre. In addition, we have a planned second screening of our Into the Melting Pot film at Bloomington Early Music Festival in Indiana USA and plans to tour the USA in 2024. In addition, we are thrilled to be selected to the final round of The Space (funded by ACE and the BBC) to have support and funding towards a broadcast commission (not yet guaranteed) of a potential radio adaptation of ***Love in the Lockdown***.

To fund future activities, the Artistic Director and General Manager will continue to apply for grants from grant-making organisations whose priorities and goals are shared by The Telling. The organisation will continue to run appeals to underpin projects.

ASSESSMENT OF MAJOR RISKS

The Trustees have considered risks to which The Telling is exposed and have established appropriate procedures to mitigate the impact of those risks.

The outlook for the 2022-23 financial year and beyond is undoubtedly a challenging one. The main difficulty faced by The Telling and all other arts organisations is a perfect storm of rising costs, combined with audiences having not yet returned to “normal” concert-going, combined with the cost-of-living also impacting significantly on ticket sale income and making promoters risk-averse. However we have learnt much about the challenges ahead which are likely to remain:

- a) A need for enhanced funding to mitigate losses due to fewer promoter engagements, reduced fees from promoters and reduced ticket income from self-promoted events
- b) A climate in which competition for funds is fiercer than ever

Our future plans detail how we are changing the model of our work to involve more paid engagements alongside fundraising for our more risky residencies/self-promotions, which depend on ticket income. The increase in paid engagements will mitigate the risk, alongside plans to continue to build our fundraising, which already has doubled between the financial years 2021/22 and 2022/23.

TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The Charities Act requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. The Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for

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taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION TO INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' Report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant accounting information of which the charity's independent examiner is unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant information and to establish that the charity's independent examiner is aware of that information.

In preparing this report, the Trustees have taken advantage of the small charity exemptions provided by the SORP and FRS102.

This report was approved by the Trustees, on and signed on their behalf by



Catherine Magdalen Edis

Chair of Trustees

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The Telling

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The Telling ('the charitable incorporated organization') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and related notes.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for my work, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of a charitable incorporated organization, you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the charity are not required to be audited and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 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 2011 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:

- i. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- ii. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
- iii. the financial statements do not comply with the applicable concerning the form and content of financial statements set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the financial statements give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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 financial statements to be reached.



David C Smith FCA for
David Smith & Co
7 Grosvenor Gardens
Victoria
London
SW1W 0AF

Date: 23rd January 2023

THE TELLING
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £
<u>Income</u>						
Donations						
Donations and gifts	3,869	17,821	21,690	1,233	6,107	7,340
Grants	15,000	14,120	29,120	-	24,658	24,658
Charitable activities						
Promoters Fees	361	7,588	7,949	-	-	-
Box Office & C D Sales	3,297	6,045	9,342	-	7,984	7,984
Royalties	-	-	-	600	-	600
Total income	<u>22,527</u>	<u>45,574</u>	<u>68,101</u>	<u>1,833</u>	<u>38,749</u>	<u>40,582</u>
<u>Expenditure</u>						
Charitable activities						
Artists	160	25,495	25,655	-	22,227	22,227
Venues	-	2,718	2,718	-	-	-
Lighting	-	3,451	3,451	-	-	-
Project sundries	23	490	513	-	747	747
Travel and subsistence	-	4,526	4,526	-	900	900
Marketing	549	2,776	3,325	236	1,941	2,177
Film and CD production	104	4,697	4,801	-	4,726	4,726
Project administration	10,944	5,192	16,136	-	12,946	12,946
	<u>11,780</u>	<u>49,345</u>	<u>61,125</u>	<u>236</u>	<u>43,487</u>	<u>43,723</u>
Other charitable costs						
General marketing	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total charitable expenditure	<u>11,780</u>	<u>49,345</u>	<u>61,125</u>	<u>236</u>	<u>43,487</u>	<u>43,723</u>
Excess of income over expenditure	10,747	(3,771)	6,976	1,597	(4,738)	(3,141)
Transfer between funds	(8,600)	8,600	-	-	-	-
Net movement in Funds	<u>2,147</u>	<u>4,829</u>	<u>6,976</u>	<u>1,597</u>	<u>(4,738)</u>	<u>(3,141)</u>
Total Funds brought forward	<u>2,218</u>	<u>(4,738)</u>	<u>(2,520)</u>	<u>621</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>621</u>
Total Funds carried forward	<u><u>4,365</u></u>	<u><u>91</u></u>	<u><u>4,456</u></u>	<u><u>2,218</u></u>	<u><u>(4,738)</u></u>	<u><u>(2,520)</u></u>

The notes on pages 17 - 18 form part of these financial statements

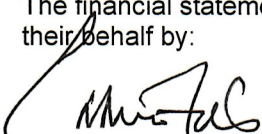
THE TELLING
BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

	<u>2022</u>		<u>2021</u>	
	£	£	£	£
Current assets				
Stock of CDs	-		-	
Debtors	356		2,929	
Cash at bank and in hand	16,310		3,051	
		16,666		5,980
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year				
		(12,210)		(8,500)
Net current assets		4,456		(2,520)
 Funds				
Restricted funds		91		(4,738)
Unrestricted funds		4,365		2,218
		4,456		(2,520)

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small charity's regime.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on 22nd January 2023 and signed on their behalf by:


Catherine Magdalen Edis
Chair of Trustees

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(A Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

1. Accounting policies

1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act.

The Telling meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognized at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

1.2 Going Concern

The charity is mainly reliant upon donations and grant income to raise revenue to meet future expenditure. The Trustees consider that it is appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. This assumes that the charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) will be successful in its fundraising activities. The financial statements do not include any adjustments that would result if insufficient funds are raised. In formulating this assessment the Trustees have taken into consideration the impact of the global cost of living crisis on the charity's ability to raise funds.

1.3 Organisation Status

The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The members of the CIO are the Trustees named on page 1. In the event of the CIO being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £5 per Trustee.

The registered address is 60 Lancaster Road, London N4 4PT

1.4 Income

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

Donated services and facilities, including gifts in kind, are included at the value to the Charity where this can be quantified and a third party is bearing the cost. No amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers.

Donations received with imposed restrictions are classified as restricted funds.

Revenue grants are credited as incoming resources when they are receivable provided conditions for receipt have been complied with. Where grants awarded for specific concerts or events are received in advance of the performance, they are deferred so that concert and event costs align with related income.

Concert and event income is recognized in the period in which the performance takes place.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognized once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Support costs are those costs incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the Charity. Governance costs are those incurred in connection with administration of the Charity and compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements and are included in support costs.

Costs of raising funds are costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, and those incurred in trading activities that raise funds.

1.6 Stocks

Stocks are CDs for sale and are stated at the lower of cost and estimated selling price.

1.7 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

1.8 Creditors and provisions

Liabilities are recognized when there is an obligation at the Balance Sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Liabilities are recognized at the amount that the Charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide. Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation.

Trade and other creditors are recognized at the settlement amount after any trade discounts received. Accruals are valued based on the estimated amount to be paid.

1.9 Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognized at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortized cost using the effective interest method.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.10 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

2. Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognized in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3. Income and Expenditure

Details of the income and expenditure are shown on the Statement of Financial Activities (page 14).

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognized in the year.

All Income and Expenditure is derived from continuing activities.

4. Trustees' remuneration and benefits

The following payments were made to Clare Ross (stage name Clare Norburn) in the year. These payments were made in respect of services provided to the charity as a performer, and as authorized by the governing document and the Trustees:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Performing/writing fees	4120	1,895
Expenses reclaimed (travel, postage etc)	438.29	414

THE TELLING

England & Wales - Charity number 1181802

Accounts

THE TELLING
(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

Charity number: 1181802

THE TELLING
TRUSTEES REPORT AND FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS
for the YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

David Smith & Co
7 Grosvenor Gardens
Victoria
London
SW1W 0AF

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**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION,
ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

Trustees	Catherine Magdalen Edis (Chair) Elizabeth Davies Joanne McIntosh Clare Ross (stage name: Clare Norburn)
Charity registered number	1181802
Registered office	60 Lancaster Road London N4 4PT
Artistic Director	Clare Norburn
Independent examiner	David C Smith of David C Smith & Co Chartered Accountants 7 Grosvenor Gardens Victoria London SW1W 0AF
Bankers	HSBC 312 Seven Sisters Road Finsbury Park London N4 2AW

The Trustees (who are also directors of The Telling for the purposes of charity law), present their report, together with the independently examined financial statements for the year ending 31 March 2021. The Trustees confirm that the Report and financial statements of the Charity comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the Charity's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (Effective 1 January 2019).

THE TELLING

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TRUSTEES REPORT

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The main objectives of The Telling are: to advance the arts and education for the public benefit, through the promotion, support and encouragement of music, in particular by presenting historically-aware musical performances, workshops, talks and recordings using period instruments, often collaborating with other art-forms including theatre, film, dance and puppetry, to reach people who are not usually attracted to classical concerts. We:

- a) give high quality concerts and performances, including repertoire which otherwise would not be performed widely
- b) work with young people in schools and amateur singers and instrumentalists from a variety of walks of life, introducing them to new repertoire and enabling them to develop and improve their musical skills.

We perform across the UK and, alongside a series of engagements, run our own growing programme of residencies, targeting places where there is little classical or early music touring which are currently Liverpool, Hastings, Worthing, Devon and Wolverhampton.

Music and particularly early music (from the middle ages to the late 18th century) is promoted by our organisation through live performances and recordings using voices and period instruments. We often collaborate with other art-forms including theatre, new writing, story-telling, film, dance and puppetry, to create narratives using source material, contemporary literature or newly-written "concert/plays" to demystify the music and reach people who are not usually attracted to classical concerts.

We combine music (which straddles classical/folk/world music) with new writing, readings or film. We move around audiences and use costume and lighting/candlelight.

We engage a pool of leading directors, actors, musicians and lighting designers from arts organisations including **BBC TV, The RSC, National Theatre, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, The Dufay Collective** and **I Fagiolini**.

"Siren-like voices... an ardour to these performances that is hard to resist." BBC Music Magazine

We have been on **BBC Radio's In Tune, Woman's Hour** and **Saturday Live** and performed for promoters including **Music at Oxford, Buxton International Festival, Brighton Early Music Festival, Little Missenden Festival** and **Keele Arts**. We have released two CDs – both on the **First Hand Records** label.

Our Artistic Director, Clare Norburn has devised a new genre where music and drama collide. Her concert/plays have attracted **4 star reviews** in **The Times** and **The Guardian** and performances at **Bridgewater Hall, St George's Bristol** and **LSO St Lukes**. The stage director we work with, **Nicholas Renton** directed Andrew Davies' BAFTA nominated **Mrs Gaskell's Wives and Daughters** for **BBC TV** and episodes of **Lewis, Musketeers, Silent Witness** and **George Gently**.

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charities Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

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TRUSTEES

The following Trustees served the charity during the year:

Catherine Magdalen Edis (Chair)
Elizabeth Davies
Joanne McIntosh
Clare Ross (stage name: Clare Norburn)

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Telling is a charitable incorporated organisation and has no share capital. In the event of a winding up, while a Member or within one year of ceasing to be a Member, the Member's liability is limited to £5. The Telling received confirmation of its charitable status on 30 January 2019 and is governed by its Constitution.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall governance of the CIO. With the exception of the Artistic Director, Clare Norburn, the Trustees are not artists involved in the charity's work. Trustees may be appointed at the discretion, and with the approval, of the existing Trustees. New Trustees are briefed of their duties by existing Trustees.

The Telling engages musicians, actors, directors, lighting designers, costume makers and other creatives on a project by project basis. All are paid on a freelance rehearsal and concert-by-concert basis and none is a permanent employee of the charity.

The administration of the Foundation during the year was undertaken on a pro bono basis by the Artistic Director, Clare Norburn.

REPORT: ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

This is the Trustees second report to the Charity Commission. This financial year started just after the first UK lockdown. Even so, The Telling was able to build upon 2019/20, our busiest year for touring with 28 live performances. In strong contrast, The Telling's expectations of an equally packed year in 2020-21 were dashed by the onset of the coronavirus, forcing the cancellation of all concerts from June to December 2020 including our planned second Liverpool Early Music Festival. During 20/21, with the privations of being unable to tour, we worked hard to maintain connections with our residency audiences around the country by transferring our work online.

Thanks to an Arts Council England's Emergency Response fund grant and new trust income and a crowdfunding appeal, The Telling was able to respond agilely. The first week of the first lockdown, we started our first weekly singing workshop on Zoom, building up a sustainable series of weekly singing workshops which, after 6 months of grants, covered their costs from participant ticket income from autumn 2020 onwards.

We also had a sense of responsibility for the well-being and prosperity of the freelance musicians who we engage and who would have expected a busy year of income and fees from concerts that were cancelled. The Telling managed to generate some income for these musicians by running a series of online events and by using grants to provide commissions to artists of online films from their own homes initially, and then two arthouse major films in July and August as restrictions started to relax. During the window between July and October 2020 we were also able to film some events, including two high quality arthouse films of our concertplay projects, *Unsung Heroine* and *Vision* (two of our Empowered Trilogy projects) in beautiful venues together and release them online. In August, September, October and

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December in between lockdowns we were able to put on 6 duo concerts – 3 were outside and the others to minimal socially distanced audiences. We also undertook a Facebook Live Stream (no live audience) in December organized by Attila the Stockbroker's (the punk poet who is a fan) to his online following which opened up our music to a brand new audience and led to 20 CDs being sold in one evening over our website!

THE TELLING ONLINE: A YEAR LONG PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

1. #InRetreat: is our programme of weekly online singing workshops & sing-along concerts every Friday at 11am: which we ran since 27 March 2020 and through till the end of April 2021. They have between 30-70 participants each week. Attendance has maintained and we have a really loyal following who also attend our other online programmes including #HomeTour. Funding from Arts Council England Emergency Fund and Sylvia Waddilove Trust enabled InRetreat sessions to be free for the first six months. Many of our participants were shielding and unable to attend their regular choir concerts. The word "lifeline" has been used by so many of them. Here's just a few of the feedback comments - we have (literally at least 100 more!):

"I am in the group that was advised to shield until August. Thank you so much for all you are doing during this time of Covid. I am a regular participant in the In Retreat sessions and love the Wednesday workshops and concerts/films too. I thought Vision in particular was absolutely stunning."

"I just feel that right now, we all really need music and creativity, and your particular brand of it is so beautiful and ethereal and spine-tingling"

"The Telling has been a lifeline over the last months. We both contracted Covid 19 in February. We are still recovering. My singing voice is slowly recovering, so Please keep doing all that you are doing. I am la La laing along with a more tuneful voice but have a long way to go."

"I have hated being in lockdown but I realise that without it, I would never have come across your wonderful medieval music and the really enjoyable workshops so I guess it is true that every cloud has a silver lining!"

"fantastic, joyous and renewing"

Following a consultation with participants, from November 2020 we charged for workshops on a course basis (3 week or 6 week courses - £5 a week or reductions if you booked the entire course) starting with a Carol Singing workshop. Most paid courses attracted 40-50 participants.

2. #Tune Tag and #HomeTour:

TuneTage was a commission to all our actors and musicians to film a piece from their own homes: over 40 days we released a new film with the musicians introducing the music – each time we would tag the next artist. The films were shared on our youtube channel and on social media and had over 40,000 views including the US and Canada.

#HomeTour was a series of 9 films of concerts and concertplays specially put together during lockdown. They have been watched by thousands of people **across the UK** - and even across the world - we have amassed a following in Canada and the US, doubling our social media following since the start of lockdown.

#HomeTour comprised:

- 3 commissioned films by our musicians - two were collaborations with filmmakers: and one was an introduction to the copies of medieval instruments which our instrumentalists play. **The Tiller Girl** was devised by our harpist Joy Smith who is also a story-teller who reimagined a traditional medieval story about a girl who tills the soil and plays her harp.
- 4 concerts filmed live performances (three outdoor in North London and one indoor performance in Hove) to very small socially distanced audiences, linked to repertoire we have taught in the InRetreat series and edited for broadcast:

"It was just so wonderful to be able to listen to live music again, and actually I quite enjoyed having a reason to make the pilgrimage from Bedford to Brighton."

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- 2 major **concertplay films** done to **BBC TV standards** with a BBC TV drama director - plus **audience participation pre-concert workshops & post-show Q&A/meet the artists**. The two major concertplays were about 12th Century Women:
 - **Vision** (about extraordinary medieval abbess Hildegard of Bingen)
 - **Unsung Heroine** (about woman troubadour Beatriz de Dia)

Both were online film adaptations of our live shows. We believe we came **up with a format which leaves other online classical content cold**: we use DRAMA to entice people to hear classical music without even realising it. Our director, Nicholas Renton has huge **TV drama credentials** including the **BAFTA-nominated *Mrs Gaskell's Wives and Daughters*** for the BBC... So, we are **particularly well placed** to bring **something extraordinary to the small screen in living rooms**.

Tim Ashley of **The Guardian** named **Vision** as one of his “**watching and listening highlights**” in the somewhat grand international company of **Salzburg Festival** and **Edinburgh International Festival**:

<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2020/aug/24/house-music-tim-ashley-watching-and-listening-highlights-edinburgh-salzburg>

*“And as part of its #HomeTour series, the London-based early music group The Telling is streaming **Vision: the Imagined Testimony of Hildegard of Bingen**, a film about the 12th-century mystic and composer, written by soprano Clare Norburn, directed by Nicholas Renton, and shot in St Mary Magdalene’s Church in Paddington. Actor Teresa Banham plays Hildegard, while Norburn and mezzo Ariane Prüssner are **mesmerising in the music**. An austerely beautiful piece about a woman whose faith gave her extraordinary strength and courage, it’s only available until this Wednesday, 26 August, but **it really is wonderful**, so do try and catch it.”*

This is what our audiences told us about Vision:

“That was the most beautiful thing I have ever seen....thank you so much!”

“OH MY GOD, IT IS BEYOND WONDERFUL! Congratulations on a fabulous performance and production!”

“why on earth is this not on BBC4? It’s better than anything I’ve seen on there for a long time”

*“I really enjoyed **Unsung Heroine** yesterday - the singing was sublime, the musicianship impeccable, and blimey, Anna Demetriou was amazing as Beatriz! I am completely in awe of your talent, scholarship and vision, and I can’t be the only person to really appreciate the astonishing feat that you have achieved in creating your workshops and concerts. I don’t think that anyone else does quite what you do, and it is a thing of great beauty and balm for the soul.”*

Each film was released on our Youtube and Facebook pages for a week and most had been 500 and 1500 views. **Vision** had over 3000.

On 16 November, **Vision** was screened again as part of the **Wimbledon International Music Festival**. We will rescreen both around International Women’s Day in March 2021. so these films will continue to have a legacy and provide a small income to our artists.

In the autumn we wrote and developed **Love in the Lockdown** which went on to be shortlisted in 6 categories for the SceneSaver online theatre awards, with Nicholas Renton winning Best Producer. We rehearsed and filmed it in February and March 2021. An online play with music, starring Alec Newman and Rachael Stirling, it was rehearsed and filmed entirely over Zoom or on actor and musicians’ mobiles/recording devices from their own homes. The action and music took place over 9 episodes, which were released in real time, on the first anniversary of the key moments at the start of the lockdown from 4 March till 20 May 2021. **Love in the Lockdown** told the story of two lovers separated by the lockdown at work on an updated version of Boccaccio’s *The Decameron* which was a kind of box-set to while away quarantine during the 1348 Black Death! .

*“an exploration of the boundaries between art & life ... intelligent ... does more than reflect overfamiliar pandemic situations back at us ... it finds new terrain” **The Guardian, Arifa Akbar on Love in the***

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Lockdown

Managerially, our Artistic Director, Clare Norburn continued in her role supported by our administrator Stephanie Williams. This management team, together with a focused and dedicated board of trustees, has continued the strengthening of the organisation with tight controls over all aspects of planning, including deciding on repertoire for programmes, scheduling, budgeting, and monitoring of financial forecasts.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The deficit at the end of the year was £2520. Since 31 March 2021, we have received an unrestricted donation which more than covers this deficit. The Telling is most grateful to the individuals and organisations who supported The Telling during the year to enable our online programme during 2020/21 including

- **Arts Council England**
 - the final instalment of our **Secret Life of Carols project**: instead of 4 concerts in 2020 we were able to commission 18 short films of carols from our musicians and a further film from our animator, Kate Anderson £1484
 - £19674 for a series of 3 online activities which ran from May 2020 up to March 2021: **In Retreat/ Tune Tag** and **HomeTour**
- grants from
 - **The Golsconcott Foundation** (£1000)
 - **Sylvia Waddilove Trust** (£1000)
- Crowdfunders and individuals who supported our In Retreat and Home tour appeals

In addition to this fundraised income, we received £8500 from **Sir John Fisher Foundation** just at the start of lockdown. They are a Trust based on the Furness peninsula, and the grant is for work in South Cumbria. We could not undertake this work during the 2020/21 financial year because of the lockdowns. We started this in October 2021 with our I, Spie tour which was well attended. So a central plan for 2022 is to continue to deliver on that promise with that two further performances this summer and a community workshop.

The Trustees are acutely aware that, in these still-early years of operation, much more needs to be done in the ensuing years to increase The Telling's reserves with a target to have reserves equivalent to running costs for a 3-month period by 2023 and 6 months by 2025. This has been challenging to bring about because of the pandemic. Looking ahead, the trustees are determined to avoid any significant loss-making ventures and keep the charity in surplus.

The administration of the Foundation during the period was undertaken on a pro bono basis by the Artistic Director, Clare Norburn. Clare personally engaged a part-time freelance administrator, Stephanie Williams and Clare covered Stephanie's freelance costs of our first year. From April 2020 The Telling was in a position to take on and pay this freelance administrator and Stephanie's skills, particularly in editing and managing online content has been instrumental in ensuring The Telling has been agile and able to adapt our work quickly and efficiently to deliver online content to support our artists at a time of great uncertainty and provide much-needed calm to our workshop participants and audiences.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

The outlook for the 2021-22 financial year and beyond is undoubtedly a challenging one. The main difficulty faced by The Telling and all other arts organisations is that it is impossible to predict when, if ever, a return to "normal" concert-giving might be expected. In May 2021 we were devastated by the sudden death of our mezzo Ariane Prüssner from undiagnosed lung cancer. This also put our summer plans on hold. At time of writing we have however undertaken our first live tour in October 2021 to great critical success. However we have learnt much about the challenges ahead which are likely to remain:

- a) A need for enhanced funding to mitigate losses due to social distancing of audiences and a natural nervousness on the part of the public to return to live concerts

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- b) A climate in which competition for funds is fiercer than ever
- c) Perceived need/expectation of needing to deliver a blend of live and online filming/streaming to reach those who are still nervous in attending live events – which increases our costs and few models are successful in monetizing digital content to the same value as live event attendance

We are now planning activities for a summer tour in 2022 and a new Christmas project for December 2022 and 2023 and setting up way in advanced a more complex tour of coming theatre and concert hall venues for our I, Spie show.

It is to be hoped that 2022 onwards may see an increase again in the level of work that this organisation undertakes in line with the 28 concerts and 3 live workshops in 2019/20. We also plan to fundraise for future residencies in Norwich, Surrey, a tour of Wales and of Scotland over the next few years.

The health and safety of all The Telling's musicians and production and administration teams, and audiences, is paramount and for any emergence from lockdown resulting in "live" performances, The Telling has a Covid-Secure Work Plan which we update for each project in line with The "Working safely during coronavirus (Covid-19)" issued by the Department for Culture Media & Sport.

To fund future activities, the Artistic Director will continue to apply for grants from grant-making organisations whose priorities and goals are shared by The Telling. The organisation will continue to run appeals to underpin our CD and online projects.

ASSESSMENT OF MAJOR RISKS

The Trustees have considered risks to which The Telling is exposed and have established appropriate procedures to mitigate the impact of those risks. Major areas of risk that may affect the financial success of the charity include the impact of the coronavirus on the wider economy and in particular the music and arts industry with its effect on box office income and income from trusts and foundations.

TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The Charities Act requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. The Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the

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financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION TO INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS

Each of the persons who are Trustees at the time when this Trustees' Report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that Trustee is aware, there is no relevant accounting information of which the charity's independent examiner is unaware, and
- that Trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a Trustee in order to be aware of any relevant information and to establish that the charity's independent examiner is aware of that information.

In preparing this report, the Trustees have taken advantage of the small charity exemptions provided by the SORP and FRS102.

This report was approved by the Trustees, on and signed on their behalf by



Catherine Magdalen Edis

Chair of Trustees

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The Telling

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The Telling ('the charitable incorporated organization') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet and related notes.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for my work, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of a charitable incorporated organization, you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the charity are not required to be audited and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 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 2011 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:

- i. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- ii. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
- iii. the financial statements do not comply with the applicable concerning the form and content of financial statements set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the financial statements give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination

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 financial statements to be reached.



David C Smith FCA for
David Smith & Co
7 Grosvenor Gardens
Victoria
London
SW1W 0AF

Date: 27th January 2022

THE TELLING
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2020 £
Income						
Donations						
Donations and gifts	1,233	6,107	7,340	8,014	8,132	16,146
Grants	-	24,658	24,658	-	21,356	21,356
Charitable activities						
Promoters Fees	-	-	-	20,386	-	20,386
Ticket Income	-	-	-	9,985	-	9,985
CD Sales	-	1,422	1,422	3,778	-	3,778
Royalties	600	-	600	-	-	-
Box Office	-	6,562	6,562	-	-	-
Total income	1,833	38,749	40,582	42,163	29,488	71,651
Expenditure						
Charitable activities						
Artists	-	22,227	22,227	2,612	41,534	44,146
Venues	-	-	-	75	1,615	1,690
Lighting	-	-	-	550	6,600	7,150
Project sundries	-	747	747	511	1,287	1,798
Travel and subsistence	-	900	900	603	4,127	4,730
Marketing	236	1,941	2,177	23	3,107	3,130
Film and CD production	-	4,726	4,726	-	8,199	8,199
Project administration	-	12,946	12,946	-	-	-
	236	43,487	43,723	4,374	66,469	70,843
Other charitable costs						
General marketing	-	-	-	187	-	187
Total charitable expenditure	236	43,487	43,723	4,561	66,469	71,030
Excess of income over expenditure	1,597	(4,738)	(3,141)	37,602	(36,981)	621
Transfer between funds	-	-	-	(36,981)	36,981	-
Net movement in Funds	1,597	(4,738)	(3,141)	621	-	621
Total Funds brought forward	621	-	621	-	-	-
Total Funds carried forward	2,218	(4,738)	(2,520)	621	-	621

The notes on pages 13 -15 form part of these financial statements.

THE TELLING
BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

	<u>2021</u>		<u>2020</u>
	£	£	£
Current assets			
Stock of CDs	-		630
Debtors	2,929		-
Cash at bank and in hand	3,051		151
	<hr/>		<hr/>
		5,980	781
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		(8,500)	(160)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net current assets		(2,520)	621
		<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
Funds			
Restricted funds		(4,738)	-
Unrestricted funds		2,218	621
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		(2,520)	621
		<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small charity's regime.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on and signed on their behalf by:

Catherine Magdalen Edis
Chair of Trustees

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

1. Accounting policies

1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act.

The Telling meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognized at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

1.2 Going Concern

The charity is mainly reliant upon donations and grant income to raise revenue to meet future expenditure. The Trustees consider that it is appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. This assumes that the charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) will be successful in its fundraising activities. The financial statements do not include any adjustments that would result if insufficient funds are raised. In formulating this assessment the Trustees have taken into consideration the potential impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic on the charity's ability to raise funds.

1.3 Organisation Status

The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The members of the CIO are the Trustees named on page 1. In the event of the CIO being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £5 per Trustee.

The registered address is 60 Lancaster Road, London N4 4PT

1.4 Income

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

Donated services and facilities, including gifts in kind, are included at the value to the Charity where this can be quantified and a third party is bearing the cost. No amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers.

Donations received with imposed restrictions are classified as restricted funds.

Revenue grants are credited as incoming resources when they are receivable provided conditions for receipt have been complied with. Where grants awarded for specific concerts or events are received in advance of the performance, they are deferred so that concert and event costs align with related income.

Concert and event income is recognized in the period in which the performance takes place.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognized once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Support costs are those costs incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the Charity. Governance costs are those incurred in connection with administration of the Charity and compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements and are included in support costs.

Costs of raising funds are costs incurred in attracting voluntary income, and those incurred in trading activities that raise funds.

1.6 Stocks

Stocks are CDs for sale and are stated at the lower of cost and estimated selling price.

1.7 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

1.8 Creditors and provisions

Liabilities are recognized when there is an obligation at the Balance Sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Liabilities are recognized at the amount that the Charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide. Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation.

Trade and other creditors are recognized at the settlement amount after any trade discounts received. Accruals are valued based on the estimated amount to be paid.

1.9 Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognized at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortized cost using the effective interest method.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.10 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

2. Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognized in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3. Income and Expenditure

Details of the income and expenditure are shown on the Statement of Financial Activities (page 11).

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognized in the year.

All Income and Expenditure is derived from continuing activities.

4. Trustees' remuneration and benefits

The following payments were made to Clare Ross (stage name Clare Norburn) in the year. These payments were made in respect of services provided to the charity as a performer, and as authorized by the governing document and the Trustees:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Performing fees	1,895	5,766
Expenses reclaimed (travel, postage etc)	414	2,343