

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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## THE TELLING

### TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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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

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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 amateur **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

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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](http://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

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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

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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."***



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### TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

#### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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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

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#### 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

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*"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

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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

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#### *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.

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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***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

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

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***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).

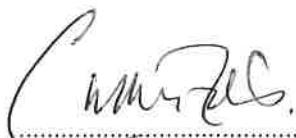
The law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial period which show a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period.

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

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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

*Sfchung*

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.

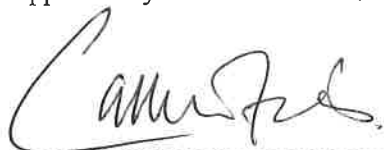
THE TELLING

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>3,226</u>	<u>11,089</u>
<i>Funds</i>			
Unrestricted funds			
Restricted Funds	11	-	219
Unrestricted Funds	11	<u>3,226</u>	<u>10,870</u>
		<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

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#### **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

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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.

**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
Shores 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 - £25,446) 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	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 to 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
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	10,870	62,569	(33,254)	(36,959)	3,226

*Unrestricted Funds – Previous Year*

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

*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	219	73,498	(110,676)	36,959	-

*Restricted Funds – Previous Year*

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

*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.