

Charity number 1181856

**Something To Aim For**

**Report and Financial Statements  
for the year ended 31 March 2025**

**Breckman & Company Ltd  
Chartered Certified Accountants  
49 South Molton Street  
London W1K 5LH**

Something To Aim For

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## **Something To Aim For**

### **Reference and Administrative Details**

#### **Constitution**

The organisation is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) under the Charities Act, registered charity number 1181856. The organisation's governing document is CIO - Foundation registered 4 February 2019.

#### **Trustees**

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees are ongoing and incorporated indirectly into the regular trustees meetings.

The trustees during the year and since the year end, were :

Caroline Head  
Prof Kirsty Fairclough  
Matt Burman  
Prof Gerard Hanlon  
Edward Francis Berg  
Prof Brian Lobel  
Virginia Simpson  
Harpreet Kaur  
Callum Shallcross

appointed 12 April 2024  
appointed 11 April 2025  
appointed 11 April 2025

#### **Independent Examiners**

Breckman & Company, 49 South Molton Street, London, W1K 5LH.

#### **Bankers**

CAF Bank Limited, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Mailing. Kent ME19 4JQ

#### **Registered office and operation address**

SPACES, Peter House, Oxford Street, Manchester, M1 5AN

## Something To Aim For

### Trustees' Report

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025. The trustees have adopted the provisions of 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).

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Something To Aim For (STAF) pursues an inclusive cultural sector where anyone can access opportunities and thrive. We remove barriers by supporting under-represented / emerging artists and small artist-led organisations through mentoring, consultancy, peer networks and fair partnerships, improving living conditions, skills, self-confidence, visibility, retention and progression, and helping shift decision-making power towards systemic change.

Our mission is focused around four pillars of work:

- **Direct Support:** Supporting the creative and organisational development of under-represented voices in culture.
- **Asset Building:** Making tools and resources more accessible to build power with marginalised communities to engage and connect through culture.
- **Strategic Initiatives:** Building bridges, connections, and value between and across the arts, learning, health / wellbeing, and third sectors.
- **Systemic Change:** Enabling the cultural and creative sectors to address systemic issues and challenges as they arise, driving positive change towards an inclusive cultural ecosystem accessible for ALL.

STAF's Charitable Objectives are the **advancement of the arts for the public benefit** by promoting greater participation by groups who are under-represented in the arts field, particularly by reason of disability, ill health (mental or physical) or social or economic disadvantage.

In 2024/25, STAF continued to deepen the strategic pivot begun in 2023/24 under *The Future Starts Now*. We spent more time working place-by-place, especially in Manchester, alongside artists, diverse-led companies and local partners, which gave us a clearer view of where the real gaps are: capacity, access, and being heard in local systems. This learning towards the end of the year fed directly into the shaping of our next business plan, *Asset Shift* (2025–2030), giving us a stronger, evidence-based platform for the period ahead.

Key achievements in 2024/2025 included:

- Delivering over 1,500 hours of bespoke consultancy support to 14 marginalised artists and artist-led organisations, addressing capacity-building, fundraising, and organisational development.
- Expanding our work in Greater Manchester through impactful projects, including the Greater Manchester Artist Network, Making Manchester Fairer Anti-Poverty Insight Group, and Creativity In Place.
- Partnering with organisations such as SICK! Productions, New Art Exchange, and Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong.
- Collaborating with institutions such as Manchester City Council and Queen Mary University London.

Through supporting diverse artists, facilitating co-creation, and engaging with grassroots communities, we have strengthened our understanding of the shifting gaps, challenges, and opportunities within the cultural sector. The economic pressures, structural inequities, and ongoing challenges faced by under-represented creatives require urgent and deliberate action. Our work in 2024/25 was about beginning to change the framework of understanding assets as a way of building the conditions for a more equitable and resilient cultural ecosystem to aid retention of under-represented creatives in the sector for the future.

## Something To Aim For

### Trustees' Report

#### Company History

STAF was set up in 2019 through a Culture & Society Discretionary Award from Wellcome Trust, specifically to support the development of an inclusive and accessible arts community. The organisation began as an amalgamation of the work of two organisations: In Company Collective (ICC), and The Sick of the Fringe (TSOTF). ICC provided mentoring and support programmes for emerging and mid-career artists. TSOTF was an international artistic development programme that engaged with artists and audiences with lived experience of chronic ill health, disability, and socio-economic disadvantage, and addressed questions of access across the creative industries. Together, they established STAF's core purpose: to remove barriers so creatives who face barriers can participate in, shape, and lead cultural work.

Changing operating contexts and community needs led STAF to refine this legacy into a clearer role as a creative infrastructure support organisation. We prioritise building cross-sector connections – arts, health, education, technology, and social justice – to strengthen skills, add capacity, and create a more inclusive cultural ecosystem, empowering marginalised voices and driving societal change.

#### OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

##### Main Activities

##### Overview

In 2024/25, STAF continued the strategic pivot begun in 2023/24 under *The Future Starts Now*, putting more of our time into (1) direct, bespoke support for under-represented creatives and diverse-led organisations, and (2) place-based work in Greater Manchester that surfaces lived-experience insight and routes it back into local systems. Feedback from our Practical Dreaming consultancy noted that meetings felt collaborative and low-hierarchy, and that support was tailored rather than “off-the-shelf”, with favourable responses averaging 86% across quality, relevance and effectiveness. These insights, alongside what we learned from artists, partners and Manchester communities about capacity, access and voice in systems, fed directly into shaping our next business plan *Asset Shift* (2025–2030).

Our delivery in 2024/25 is underpinned by five strategic aims:

- Building power with diverse creatives
- Growing equity in creative ecosystems
- Enabling systemic change
- Advancing cross-sector collaboration
- Embedding inclusive practices and care

These activities were delivered in line with STAF's values of **inclusivity, generosity and authenticity**.

STAF continued to work with a small core team in 2024/25, bringing in freelance/specialist support where projects required particular experience. To strengthen governance and ensure the board reflects the places and communities we are most active in, STAF ran a trustee recruitment exercise during the year. As a result, two Manchester-based trustees joined the board in April 2025, adding local insight, diverse experience and strengthening the link between programme delivery in Greater Manchester and board-level oversight.

#### Business Plan and Strategic Development

In 2023/24 STAF began delivering *The Future Starts Now* to pivot our offer, test our consultancy and mentoring with under-represented creatives. Throughout 2024/25 we continued with this direction: working closely with artists, diverse-led companies and place-based partners (especially in Greater Manchester), and getting “under the skin” of what small, under-resourced creatives are struggling with: capacity, access, confidence, and being heard in systems.

This delivery and listening showed us that our core purpose is still right; and many of the barriers are structural. On the strength of that learning, at the beginning of 2025, we adopted *Asset Shift* (2025–2030) as an extension of *The Future Starts Now*. It carries forward the same intent but makes it more deliberately asset-based, recognising lived experience, peer networks and local cultural ecosystems as assets to be activated.

## Something To Aim For

### Trustees' Report

#### Deepening our Work in Greater Manchester

STAF continues to stay true to the roots of its founder, delivering impactful projects that address critical challenges in the anti-poverty and arts and culture spaces in Greater Manchester.

- **Making Manchester Fairer: Anti-Poverty Insight Group (APIG)**

The year 2024/25 saw the second year of a two-year commission by the Manchester City Council's Public Health Department to convene and manage an Anti-Poverty Insight Group. This initiative plays a vital role in delivering the council's *Making Manchester Fairer: Anti-Poverty Strategy* by ensuring that a diverse range of communities are actively involved in consultations and can influence policy decisions that directly impact them. STAF consulted during the application process to ensure accessibility was taken into account and that a diverse representation of Manchester residents and interests was reflected within the 21 Insight Group members. The members, made up of both residents and VSCOs, have a wealth of professional and lived experience that they have contributed to the group. Thanks to their contributions through this innovative co-creation model, 30 out of 53 of the action points outlined in the *Making Manchester Fairer: Anti-Poverty Strategy* are now underway.

- **Greater Manchester Artist Network (GMAN)**

In 2024, STAF received funding from the GM Spirit fund to create a brand new network of artists and creatives, running events centred around wellbeing pop-up spaces for thinking, discussion, and collaborating. This is a network that connects artists at any stage, professional or non-professional. All disciplines are welcome to join the network, from actors and playwrights, through digital artists and sound editors, to painters and musicians. Although the network is predominately for Manchester residents, the events welcome anyone. Events have included casual meet-ups and panel discussions, across several different locations in Manchester, including the city centre, Longsight, and Benchill. Feedback has indicated that event attendees gained a sense of empowerment as an artist, as well as reassurance that they're not alone in their aims and struggles.

- **Manchester Artist Bursary**

Running concurrently with GMAN, STAF administered a bursary, using £3k from the GM Spirit fund, to further help artists based in the GM area. The bursary was made in two rounds of 15 recipients each - 30 recipients total - with an application process that focused on accessibility to reduce administrative and reporting load. Though the highest bursary award was only £100, evaluation of the bursary showed that this still made a significant difference to the recipients, allowing many to travel to events, purchase equipment, or participate in training that they would not otherwise have been able to afford.

- **Creativity In Place (CIP)**

STAF was commissioned by Manchester City Council for Creativity In Place, a demographic and capacity building mapping report as part of the research and development for Manchester's Place Partnership, to inform future funding strategies. We collected insights rooted in the voices of those most affected, identifying mismatches between investment strategy and lived experience. Our findings are based on research and ward mapping data, providing context such as population size, median age, ethnicity, and other cultural and educational assets. The report combines lived experience and data to surface overlooked knowledge and support a more connected, responsive cultural sector. From these insights, we offer recommendations to strengthen interconnectedness, improve community awareness, pilot bespoke training, and build long-term sustainability. The report will be published at the beginning of 2026, with communities welcome to submit their projects and suggestions to ensure as full and co-created a picture as possible.

- **Building An Anti-Poverty Community (BAAPC):**

Co-led with Manchester Central Foodbank (MCFB), BAAPC ran from April 2023 and, following a UKRI extension, concluded in May 2024. The project engaged ten neighbourhood anti-poverty partnerships to develop local solutions and approaches to research and training, culminating in Manchester's first Anti-Poverty Summit. The work also informed national debate, with MCFB research cited in the House of Commons.

## Something To Aim For

### Trustees' Report

#### Bespoke Support For Diverse Artists / Artist-led Organisations

STAF has tailored support to over 14 marginalised and under-represented artists and diverse-led art companies with a total of approximately 1,500 support hours. Providing this support remains one of our key activities, reflecting our commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion within the creative sector. Our support covered a broad spectrum of bespoke needs, including organisational diagnosis, development strategies, human resource development, access consultation, executive support, fundraising, finance, and administrative assistance.

We also began our consultancy evaluation, receiving feedback from previous recipients of our support that we are delivering our work in a safe and trusted space, effectively meeting the goals of our clients, paving way for wider structural and systemic change. Through these engagements, STAF continues to provide direct and necessary support to our clients while gaining insight into the challenges in the sector.

#### Key Consultancy Highlights

- **SICK! Productions (Manchester):** In early 2025, SICK! Productions undertook a comprehensive strategic review, focusing on four key components: strategy, shaping of the company, resources, and people. We were engaged to contribute to the people component. Our consultancy had a positive impact on SICK!'s strategic review, with SICK! sharing in our consultancy evaluation that the document we provided became a clear and useful reference, giving a clear plan for transition and training needs, as well as validating internal observations and bringing external legitimacy to the proposed changes.
- **Keisha Thompson (Manchester):** STAF assessed KT's work-in-progress presentation of *The Bell Curves* in April 2024 and provided recommendations to enhance accessibility for future showings, including a consultancy report covering access to and within the venue, programme access, information and broader suggestions for ongoing development and inclusive strategies.
- **Live Art Development Agency (LADA, London):** STAF's support to LADA focused on supporting their ex-Director Ria Righteous who stepped down in July 2024 and helping with the recruitment process for new leadership.
- **PERKY:** STAF supported PERKY to incubate its next iteration as a creative sexual, health, education and empowerment organisation for women and women with learning disabilities, with a focus on business planning.
- **Seth Connor-Fullwood:** STAF began to support Seth Connor-Fullwood, a Manchester-based early-career writer, through Practical Dreaming. His poetry has been published in anthologies and he has worked closely with Young Identity, while also being part of the Science and Design Museum's Cotton Connections decolonisation project.
- **Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong (ADAHK):** STAF supported ADAHK's bilingual (Chinese / English) online oral history platform "Arts with the Disabled in Hong Kong – THE Platform", the first online resource of its kind in Hong Kong, advising on language sensitivity and nuance so it can serve as a reliable reference for disabled artists, practitioners and researchers.

#### Dedicated Longer-term Support For Artists and Artist-led Organisations

Alongside private consultancy clients, STAF continued its dedicated support to artists and artist-led organisations. Artist/Artist-led organisations receiving STAF support in 2024/25 included:

##### High Rise Entertainment CIC (HRE):

HRE is in their second year as an Arts Council England (ACE) National Portfolio Organisation (NPO). STAF continued to provide executive support during this consolidation period, helping the company strengthen its internal capacity while sustaining an ambitious artistic and touring programme.

This included:

- **Capacity and Organisational Development:** STAF supported HRE to put more day-to-day capacity in place, including the recruitment and onboarding of a General Manager. This was an important step in embedding organisational knowledge, creating continuity around finance/admin, and freeing the leadership to focus on artistic direction and partnerships.
- **Strategic and Professional Development:** STAF provided ongoing remote mentoring for HRE's leadership, focusing on practical skills and strategic planning to help navigate the complex landscape of the creative sector.

## Something To Aim For

### Trustees' Report

- **Fundraising and Development:** As one of the few diverse-led new ACE NPOs (2023-26) in this very competitive funding environment, STAF continued to support HRE's funding strategy.

#### Virginia "Gin" Wilson:

STAF continued to support Gin, as she focused on the organisation she founded, Faggamuffin Bloc Party (FBP). Throughout the year, STAF worked closely with Gin, providing a supportive framework for her to advance her creative and operational goals, such as training for cashflow forecasting, and securing further funding, including the Grand Camp Maisie Fund grant, established in memory of LGBTQI+ Activist, Andrew Lumsden.

### STAF Projects

**Performing Leadership Differently, Queen Mary University of London (QMUL), School of Business and Management, Impact Fund (PLD):** In July - August 2024, STAF partnered with HighRise Entertainment and Urban MBA to create a paid Theatre and Entrepreneurship Residency, based on the PLD research findings, that supports a new way to engage with the theatre world; its creativity and shortcomings. We created this residency to provide knowledge of the current state of the industry so that the participants can bring new eyes and new ideas to innovate for the future. Participants shared during the evaluation that they had been introduced to new concepts and industry insight that they wouldn't have had an opportunity to otherwise, including one participant being able to consider how to integrate commercial partnership as part of a forward-thinking collaboration for their future pitches.

### Partnership and Industry Support

**Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong (ADAHK), "Walking the Talk and Talking the Walk – Approaches in Making Arts More Inclusive" Trainers' Training Workshop (online, Hong Kong):** STAF designed and delivered a four-session online training programme for ADAHK on inclusive and disability-led practice in the arts. To ground the sessions in current UK practice, STAF invited three UK organisations/practitioners: SICK! Festival, Casson & Friends, and Mind the Gap, to share how they build inclusion into programme design, artist development and ongoing collaboration within inclusive arts practice. This created a practical exchange between UK practice and Hong Kong's disability/inclusive arts sector.

**Crip Art Residency (HK):** Invited by a group of disabled artists "c.5d8" in Hong Kong, Janet Tam gave a talk on **Sharing different models of disability art and practices** in July 2024 as part of the group's residency programme. Janet shared the development of disability arts in Hong Kong and drew on her experiences in both locations (UK and HK) to look at how different models of disability arts are viewed and referred to.

**People Make It Work (PMIW):** Janet joined as one of the panel speakers at PMIW's training sessions in July 2024 focusing on Leadership, sharing STAF and her own experience leadership transformation, challenges and barriers.

### Working Towards Cross-Sector Change

**British Academy-funded *Pandemic preparedness in the live performing arts: Lessons to learn from COVID-19*:** STAF is proud to be part of the *Pandemic Preparedness in the Live Performing Arts: Lessons to Learn from COVID-19* research project, commissioned by the British Academy and conducted by academics from leading institutions across the G7, led from the Universities of Exeter and Bristol. Speaking at the study report launch, Janet Tam shared the dual essence of crisis in Chinese, as both "danger" and "opportunity", saying that "the capability to cultivate a more equitable cultural landscape lies with all of us."

**"Connectrting the Dots" - A Gathering of Global Ethnic Majority Leaders:** As part of the programme at New Art Exchange, a Nottingham-based NPO, Janet Tam contributed a guest blog and took part in the "Connecting the Dots" gathering, a world-café event bringing Global Ethnic Majority leaders together to reflect on urgent themes including governance, creative climate action, curatorial practice, civic responsibility and legacy. In her piece, *Harmony Without Uniformity: Listening for Nuance in Precarious Times* Janet shared her hopes for the future of a truly equitable cultural sector, based on her own experiences as a Hong Konger migrating to escape increasing authoritarian rule.



## Something To Aim For

### Trustees' Report

#### FINANCIAL REVIEW

##### Financial Position

In 2024/25 STAF continued to operate within the framework of *The Future Starts Now*, consolidating the pivot begun in the previous year. Despite a competitive funding environment for small arts charities, STAF maintained a balanced operating position by combining core grant income with earned and project income. We continued to diversify income streams, with a higher proportion of income coming from consultancy and project-based work, which reduces reliance on any single funder.

Income generated through Consultancy and Partnership work within this period includes:

- High Rise Entertainment CIC (consultancy)
- Faggamuffin Block Party (consultancy)
- Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong (consultancy and partnership)
- SICK! Productions (consultancy and partnership)
- New Art Exchange [NAE] (partnership)

Alongside consultancy, STAF continued to deliver place-based and Manchester-facing activity in 2024/25, such as the Anti-Poverty Insight Group and the Greater Manchester Artist Network. These strands are funded separately from core operations and form a growing part of our mixed-income model.

2024/25 was the second year of STAF's significant Arts Access and Participation Fund grant of £180,000 over 36 months from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation (to 31 March 2026). In line with accruals accounting, the £30,000 received in October 2024 had already been recognised as income in 2023/24 and, on receipt, reduced the prior-year debtor; no additional PHF income was recognised in 2024/25. During the reporting period, STAF submitted a further application to PHF's Arts Fund for 2026–29 and, at the time of preparing this report, the application was successful, with PHF confirming £230,100 over three years. Together, these grants acknowledge STAF's growth as an organisation, its wide-ranging impact and PHF's continued confidence in our work to tackle structural inequality in the cultural sector.

##### Future Plans

Although STAF has secured a further three years of core support from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation spanning 2026/27 to 2028/29, our financial strategy will continue to evolve towards a diversified income mix to strengthen resilience and sustainability. As part of our financial planning, 31% of our projected unrestricted consultancy income for 2025/26, amounting to £26,599, is already in the pipeline at year end.

##### Reserves Policy

Total reserves at 31 March 2025 amounted to deficit £70,333 (2024: deficit £52,606), comprising deficit £95,678 unrestricted funds (2024: deficit £144,507) and £25,345 (2024: £91,901) of restricted funds.

As part of the ongoing business planning, we will continue to develop our strategy to reach the organisation's desired reserve policy (3 months of annual expenditure). As at 31 March 2025, the free reserves of the charity were deficit £95,678 (2024: deficit £144,507). We will continue to keep this policy under review in line with the operational guidelines issued by the Charities Commission.

#### STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

##### Governing document

Something To Aim For (STAF) is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation governed by its CIO Constitution dated 28 January 2019.

##### Organisational structure

During 2024/25, the day-to-day running of STAF is undertaken by STAF's small core team: Executive Director/CEO, Programme Delivery Lead, and General Manager.

STAF's core team continued to be supported by a network of associates and specialist consultants, who collectively are responsible for ensuring the successful delivery of the business plan.

## Something To Aim For

### Trustees' Report

#### Governance

Every Trustee must be appointed for a term of three years by a resolution passed at a quorum meeting of the Trustees.

In selecting individuals for appointment as Trustees, the Trustees must have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the CIO.

STAF follows a standard process for recruiting new members. Firstly, an advertisement is placed, based on the current skills needed on the Board, requesting new potential Trustees to apply with a CV, and a covering letter stating why they would like to join the Board of Trustees, the current Board will review the selection and invite them to interview. Interviews are usually held with an appointed member of the Board and then a follow up interview with the CEO and Executive Director of STAF.

Any person retiring as a Trustee is eligible for reappointment, provided that a Trustee who has served for three consecutive terms may not be reappointed for a fourth consecutive term but may be reappointed after an interval of at least one year.

#### Trustee Induction and Training

All trustees receive a board induction pack. This includes STAF's Constitution which states details of the responsibilities of the charities Trustees, a copy of the most recent Board Papers and the latest Trustees Annual Report and statement of accounts. The individual is then invited along to the next Board meeting where they are officially inducted onto the Board.

#### Additional Board information

Board meetings are currently set to 4 meetings every financial year. Agenda points covered in each meeting are:

- Overseeing and review strategy
- Review of current risk register
- Financial performance and position
- Company updates and overview

This report was approved by the Board of Trustees on 27 January 2026 and signed on its behalf by Matt Burman

Signed by:  
  
9467D54AABAE46B...  
Matt Burman  
Trustee

## **Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Something To Aim For**

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025, which are set out on pages 10 to 23.

### **Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

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 2011 Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

### **Basis of independent examiner's statement**


My examination was carried out in accordance with general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

### **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 (other than that disclosed below \*) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did 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.

Signed by:  
  
44007CAC2117467...

**Richard Nelson FCCA**  
**Breckman & Company Ltd**  
**Chartered Certified Accountants**

49 South Molton Street  
London W1K 5LH

27 January 2026

## Something To Aim For

### Statement of Financial Activities (including Income and Expenditure Account) for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total £
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>	<b>2</b>						
Charitable activities							
Other trading activities - page 11		86,585	48,068	134,653	109,402	81,023	190,425
Investments	<b>3</b>	62	-	62	6	-	6
<b>Total</b>		<u>86,647</u>	<u>48,068</u>	<u>134,715</u>	<u>109,408</u>	<u>81,023</u>	<u>190,431</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>							
Raising funds:							
Fundraising		210	-	210	12	-	12
Charitable activities - page 12		37,608	114,624	152,232	77,159	82,221	159,380
<b>Total</b>		<u>37,818</u>	<u>114,624</u>	<u>152,442</u>	<u>77,171</u>	<u>82,221</u>	<u>159,392</u>
<b>Net income / (expenditure)</b>		48,829	(66,556)	(17,727)	32,237	(1,198)	31,039
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>							
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>		(144,507)	91,901	(52,606)	176,744	93,099	(83,645)
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>13, 14</b>	<u>(95,678)</u>	<u>25,345</u>	<u>(70,333)</u>	<u>(144,507)</u>	<u>91,901</u>	<u>(52,606)</u>

The notes on pages 15 to 23 form an integral part of these financial statements.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derives from continuing activities.

## Something To Aim For

Year ended 31 March 2025

	2025 £	2024 £
<b>Income from charitable activities</b>		
<b>Artistic income</b>		
Consultancy fees	26,599	49,932
Virginia Wilson Project	31,378	36,957
Other income	28,608	22,513
	<u>86,585</u>	<u>109,402</u>
<b>Project specific funding</b>		
<b>Grants/Donations</b>		
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	-	60,000
UKRI Community Research Network / BAAPC	3,773	6,023
MMF Anti-Poverty Insight Group	19,695	15,000
Greater Manchester Artist Network	19,600	-
Creativity In Place	5,000	-
	<u>48,068</u>	<u>81,023</u>

## Something To Aim For

Year ended 31 March 2025

	2025 £	2024 £
<b>Expenditure on raising funds</b>		
Fundraising and publicity of the charity	210	12
	<u>210</u>	<u>12</u>
<b>Expenditure on charitable activities</b>		
<b>Artistic</b>		
<b>General costs</b>		
Direct costs	7,028	72,799
Salaries	81,564	52,744
Social security costs	2,490	3,138
Staff pension scheme costs	1,359	3,174
Consultancy	17,676	2,810
Travel	4,835	2,449
Marketing/promotions	75	-
Rent/rates	2,713	1,495
Legal/professional	20,668	9,440
	<u>138,408</u>	<u>148,049</u>
Support costs - page 13	9,924	10,125
Governance costs - page 13	3,900	1,206
	<u>152,232</u>	<u>159,380</u>

## Something To Aim For

Year ended 31 March 2025

	2025		2024	
	£	£	£	£
<b>Support and governance costs</b>				
<b>Office overheads</b>				
Telephone/fax	85		115	
Insurance	2,154		2,115	
Amortisation of goodwill	2,368		2,368	
Depreciation of plant/machinery	(1)		922	
Depreciation of fixtures/fittings/equipment	1		542	
	<u>          </u>	4,607	<u>          </u>	6,062
<b>Administration costs</b>				
Staff welfare & training	1,246		295	
Entertaining	57		20	
Printing/postage/stationery	91		48	
Subscriptions/licences	2,977		1,693	
Sundries	582		3	
Charitable donations - other	189		-	
	<u>          </u>	5,142	<u>          </u>	2,059
<b>Professional/financial</b>				
Computer costs	109		1,926	
Bank charges	66		78	
	<u>          </u>	175	<u>          </u>	2,004
		<u>9,924</u>		<u>10,125</u>
<b>Governance costs</b>				
Accountancy/consultancy	3,900		1,206	
	<u>          </u>	3,900	<u>          </u>	1,206
		<u>13,824</u>		<u>11,331</u>

## Something To Aim For

### Balance Sheet 31 March 2025

		2025		2024	
	Notes	£	£	£	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Intangible assets	9		-		2,368
Tangible assets	10		1		1
			<u>1</u>		<u>2,369</u>
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	11	6,686		33,888	
Cash at bank and in hand		16,457		39,686	
		<u>23,143</u>		<u>73,574</u>	
<b>Liabilities</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(93,477)		(128,549)	
<b>Net current (liabilities)</b>			<u>(70,334)</u>		<u>(54,975)</u>
<b>Excess of current liabilities over total assets</b>			<u>(70,333)</u>		<u>(52,606)</u>
<b>The funds of the charity</b>					
Unrestricted funds	13				
- General fund			(95,678)		(144,507)
Restricted funds	14		25,345		91,901
<b>Total charity funds</b>			<u>(70,333)</u>		<u>(52,606)</u>

The accounts were approved by the Board of Trustees on 27 January 2026 and signed on its behalf by

Signed by:  
  
9467D54AABAE46B...  
**Matt Burman**  
**Trustee**

The notes on pages 15 to 23 form an integral part of these financial statements.



## **Something To Aim For**

### **Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025**

#### **1. Accounting policies**

##### **1.1. Basis of preparing the financial statements**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (issued in October 2019) 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) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)).

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

##### **1.2. Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid after taking account of any trade discounts due.

##### **1.3. 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.

##### **1.4. 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 after allowing for any trade discounts due.

##### **1.5. Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis.**

The company is dependent on the continued support of grant aiding bodies. The trustees believe that the company will continue to receive this support and accordingly consider that it is appropriate to prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis.

## Something To Aim For

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

#### 1.6. Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when:

- the charity is legally entitled to the funds
- any performance conditions attached to the income have been met or are fully within the control of the charity
- there is sufficient certainty that receipt of the income is considered probable
- the amount can be reliably measured

#### - Donations and legacies

Grants/donations are recognised in incoming resources in the year in which they are receivable, except as follows:

- when donors specify that grants/donations given to the charity must be used in future accounting periods, the income is deferred until those periods
- when donors impose conditions which have to be fulfilled before the charity becomes entitled to use such income, the income is deferred and not included in incoming resources until the preconditions for use are met.

#### - Charitable activities

Artistic income - is included in incoming resources in the period in which the relevant activity takes place.

Project specific funding - when donors specify that donations and grants are for particular restricted purposes, which do not amount to pre-conditions regarding entitlement, this income is included in incoming resources of restricted funds when receivable.

#### - Donated services and facilities

Donated services or facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. On receipt, donated services and facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

#### - Investment income

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

## **Something To Aim For**

### **Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025**

#### **1.7. Expenditure**

All expenditure is included on an accruals basis inclusive of any VAT which cannot be recovered and is recognised when:

- there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment
- it is probable that settlement will be required
- the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably

##### **- Costs of raising funds**

Costs incurred in attracting donations, and those incurred in trading activities that raise funds.

##### **- Charitable activities**

Artistic costs - costs incurred in the production of charitable activities in the year.

##### **- Support costs**

The administrative and overhead costs associated with running the office from which the company operates as well as governance costs. Support costs are wholly attributable to theatre production costs.

##### **- Governance costs**

Costs associated with the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity.

#### **1.8. Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Individual fixed assets costing £100 or more are capitalised at cost.

Depreciation is provided at annual rates calculated to write off the cost less residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Office equipment	-	33% on straight line
Fixtures/fittings/equipment	-	25% on straight line

#### **1.9. Pensions**

The pension costs charged in the financial statements represent the contributions payable by the company during the year in accordance with SSAP 24.

The regular cost of providing retirement pensions and related benefits is charged to the income and expenditure account over the employees' service lives on the basis of a constant percentage of earnings.

#### **1.10. Fund accounting**

Funds held by the charity are either:

- Unrestricted general funds - these are funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the trustees.
- Restricted funds - these are funds that can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

## Something To Aim For

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

#### 1.11. 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 recognised at transaction value, and subsequently measured at their settlement value (with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method).

#### 2. Incoming resources

The total incoming resources for the year have been derived from the principal activity undertaken wholly in the UK.

3. Interest receivable	2025 £	2024 £
Bank interest	62	6

4. Net income/(expenditure) for the year is stated after charging:	2025 £	2024 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	2,368	3,832
Independent examination - independent examination	3,900	1,206

#### 5. Trustees' emoluments and reimbursed expenses

The trustees received no remuneration during the year.

The aggregated amount reimbursed to trustees during the year was £nil (2024 - £nil)

Something To Aim For

Notes to the Financial Statements  
for the year ended 31 March 2025

6. Staff costs and numbers	2025 £	2024 £
<b>Staff costs</b>		
Salaries and wages	81,564	52,744
Social security costs	2,490	3,138
Pension costs	1,359	3,174
	<u>85,413</u>	<u>59,056</u>

No employee earned £60,000 or more during the year (2024 - £nil).

**Staff numbers**

The average numbers of employees (including casual and part time staff) during the year was made up as follows:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
Production	2	4
Support	2	2
	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>

7. Pension costs

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme in respect of its employees. The scheme and its assets are held by independent managers. The pension charge represents contributions due from the company and amounted to £1,359 (2024 - £3,174).

8. Corporation taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

## Something To Aim For

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

#### 9. Fixed assets - intangible assets

	Goodwill £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>		
1 April 2024 /		
31 March 2025	11,843	11,843
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Provision for diminution in value</b>		
1 April 2024	9,475	9,475
Charge for year	2,368	2,368
	<hr/>	<hr/>
31 March 2025	11,843	11,843
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net book values</b>		
31 March 2025	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
31 March 2024	2,368	2,368
	<hr/>	<hr/>

#### 10. Fixed assets - tangible assets

	Plant/ machinery £	Fixtures/ fittings/ equipment £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>			
1 April 2024 /			
31 March 2025	2,645	2,727	5,372
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
Charge for year	(1)	1	-
1 April 2024 /			
31 March 2025	2,645	2,726	5,371
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net book values</b>			
31 March 2025	-	1	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
31 March 2024	(1)	2	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

## Something To Aim For

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

11. Debtors	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	2,798	-
Other debtors	3,888	3,888
Prepayments and accrued income	-	30,000
	<u>6,686</u>	<u>33,888</u>

Paul Hamlyn Foundation (PHF): £30,000 received in October 2024 related to income accrued at 31 March 2024; accordingly, no PHF income is recognised in 2024/25.

12. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	2025 £	2024 £
Other taxation/social security	89,312	87,295
Other creditors	265	37,354
Accruals	3,900	3,900
	<u>93,477</u>	<u>128,549</u>

13. Unrestricted funds	Brought forward £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	Carried forward £
General fund	<u>(144,507)</u>	<u>86,647</u>	<u>(37,818)</u>	<u>(95,678)</u>

## Something To Aim For

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

14. Restricted funds	Brought forward £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	Carried forward £
Queen Mary University London Impact Fund	43,160	-	(43,160)	-
UKRI Community Research Network (CRN) / BAAPC	3,741	-	(3,741)	-
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	30,000	-	(30,000)	-
UKRI CRN Extension	-	3,773	(3,773)	-
MMF Anti-Poverty Insight Group	15,000	19,695	(15,029)	19,666
Greater Manchester Arts Network (GMAN)	-	19,600	(18,250)	1,350
Creativity In Place (CIP)	-	5,000	(671)	4,329
	<u>91,901</u>	<u>48,068</u>	<u>(114,624)</u>	<u>25,345</u>

#### **Queen Mary University London Impact Fund**

In July - August 2024, support from QMUL's School of Business and Management Impact Fund enabled Performing Leadership Differently: a paid Theatre & Entrepreneurship Residency co-designed with HighRise Entertainment and Urban MBA, translating research insights into practical skills and sector engagement for emerging creatives.

#### **UKRI CRN Extension**

The Building An Anti-Poverty Community (BAAPC) project is a collaboration between STAF and Manchester Central Foodbank (MCFB), supported by a UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Community Research Networks grant. This initiative reflects a shift towards a more community-driven approach to research and innovation, focusing on the effective use of creativity as a tool for community engagement and social change. The project leverages the support of UKRI to integrate the public's role in research, focusing on developing solutions that are practical and resonate with the community's needs. BAAPC operates within Manchester four localised clusters across the city of Manchester, utilising MCFB's Anti-Poverty Community network for a collective and innovative approach to tackling poverty, primarily through workshops and dialogues. Initially running from April to September 2023, the Project was extended and ran until May 2024.

#### **MMF Anti-Poverty Insight Group**

STAF continued the two-year commission by the Manchester City Council's Public Health Department to convene and manage an Anti-Poverty Insight Group. This initiative plays a vital role in delivering the council's Making Manchester Fairer: Anti-Poverty Strategy by ensuring that a diverse range of communities are actively involved in consultations and can influence policy decisions that directly impact them.

#### **Greater Manchester Arts Network (GMAN)**

STAF was engaged by the Manchester City Council's Culture Department to establish a Greater Manchester Arts Network through the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Cultural Grant to ensure creative communities in Greater Manchester are better informed, connected to opportunities and are empowered to deliver impact for their own local members. Further to the Network, STAF is administering a bursary fund to further help individuals in these communities with these aims.



Something To Aim For

Notes to the Financial Statements  
for the year ended 31 March 2025

Creativity In Place (CIP)

STAF was commissioned by Manchester City Council for Creativity In Place, a demographic and capacity building mapping report as part of the research and development for Manchester's Place Partnership, to inform future funding strategies. We collected insights rooted in the voices of those most affected, identifying mismatches between investment strategy and lived experience. Our findings are based on research and ward mapping data, providing context such as population size, median age, ethnicity, and other cultural and educational assets. The report combines lived experience and data to surface overlooked knowledge and support a more connected, responsive cultural sector. From these insights, we offer recommendations to strengthen interconnectedness, improve community awareness, pilot bespoke training, and build long-term sustainability. The report will be published at the beginning of 2026, with communities welcome to submit their projects and suggestions to ensure as full and co-created a picture as possible.

15. Analysis of net assets between funds

	General funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Fund balances at 31 March 2025 are represented by:			
Tangible fixed assets	1	-	1
Net current (liabilities)	(95,679)	25,345	(70,334)
	<u>(95,678)</u>	<u>25,345</u>	<u>(70,333)</u>

16. Related party transactions

During the year the charity had no related party transactions that require disclosure.

16. Liability of members

If the CIO is wound up, the members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities. At 31 March 2025 there were 7 members.

**SOMETHING TO AIM FOR**

13 Brooke Avenue  
Tameside  
Manchester  
M43 6HA

Breckman & Company Ltd  
Chartered Certified Accountants  
49 South Molton Street  
London W1K 5LH

27 January 2026

Dear Sirs

**Letter of Representation**

The following representations are made on the basis of enquiries of management and staff with relevant knowledge and experience such as we consider necessary in connection with your independent examination of the charity's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025. These enquiries have included inspection of supporting documentation where appropriate and are sufficient to satisfy ourselves that we can make each of the following representations. All representations are made to the best of our knowledge and belief.

**General**

- 1 We acknowledge that the work performed by you is substantially less in scope than an audit performed in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) and that you do not express an audit opinion.
- 2 We confirm that the charitable company qualifies as small in accordance with the conditions set out in chapter 1 of part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.
- 3 We confirm that the charity was entitled to exemption under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 the requirement to have its financial statements for the financial year ended 31 March 2025 audited. We also confirm that the members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the financial year in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.
- 4 We have fulfilled our responsibilities as trustees as set out in the terms of your engagement letter dated 20 November 2023, under the Charities Act 2011 for preparing financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for making accurate representations to you.
- 5 All the transactions undertaken by the charity have been properly reflected and recorded in the accounting records.
- 6 All the accounting records have been made available to you for the purpose of your independent examination. We have provided you with unrestricted access to all appropriate persons within the charity, and with all other records and related information requested, including minutes of all management and trustee meetings and correspondence with The Charity Commission.
- 7 The financial statements are free of material misstatements, including omissions.

**Assets and liabilities**

- 8 The charity has satisfactory title to all assets and there are no liens or encumbrances on the charitable company's assets.
- 9 All actual liabilities, contingent liabilities and guarantees given to third parties have been recorded or disclosed as appropriate.

- 10 We have no plans or intentions that may materially alter the carrying value and where relevant the fair value measurements or classification of assets and liabilities reflected in the financial statements.

**Accounting estimates**

- 11 Significant assumptions used by us in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.

**Loans and arrangements**

- 12 The charitable company has not granted any advances or credits to, or made guarantees on behalf of, trustees.

**Legal claims**

- 13 No claims in connection with litigation have been, or are expected to be, received.

**Laws and regulations**

- 14 There are no known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.

**Related parties**

- 15 We are not aware of any transactions with related parties requiring disclosure in the financial statements.

**Subsequent events**

- 16 All events subsequent to the date of the financial statements which require adjustment or disclosure have been properly accounted for and disclosed.

**Going concern**

- 17 We believe that the charity's financial statements should be prepared on a going concern basis on the grounds that current and future sources of funding or support will be more than adequate for the charitable company's needs. We have considered a period of twelve months from the date of approval of the financial statements. We believe that no further disclosures relating to the charity's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made in the financial statements.

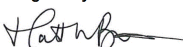
**Grants and donations**

- 18 All grants, donations and other income, the receipt of which is subject to specific terms or conditions, have been notified to you. There have been no breaches of terms or conditions in the application of such income.

**Restricted grants and donations are as follows:**

UKRI CRN Extension	£3,773
MMF Anti-Poverty Insight Group	£19,695
Greater Manchester Arts Network (GMAN)	£19,600
Creativity In Place (CIP)	£5,000

Yours faithfully

Signed by:  


.....9467D54AABAE46B.....

MATT BURMAN

Signed on behalf of the Board of Trustees