

# The Fig Tree Project [Stonehouse]

[An Incorporated Charitable Organisation]

Annual Report and Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 March 2025

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# **The Fig Tree Project [Stonehouse]**

[An Incorporated Charitable Organisation]

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### **Trustees**

Irwin Wilson [Chair]  
Su Chard [resigned June 2024]  
Marc Chevalier  
Jackie Haines [From February 2025]  
Rich Hamlin  
Catherine Thompson  
John Thompson  
Lia Tonkins

### **Secretary**

John Thompson

### **Treasurer**

Marc Chevalier

### **Registered Office**

Hillgrove  
Verney Road  
Stonehouse  
GL10 2QD

### **Charity Registration Number**

1183851

### **Solicitors**

Leeper Prosser  
High Street  
Stonehouse  
GL10

### **Bankers**

The Co-operative Bank plc  
1 Balloon Street  
Manchester  
M60 4EP

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The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

### **Trustees' Annual Report 2024 - 25**

The Fig Tree Project is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation run in accordance with our Governing Document. Our Governance Structure comprises a board of trustees who are elected by the trustees for a three year term of office, which may be extended by subsequent terms. The board of trustees provide strategic overview of the work of the CIO, establish and maintain policies and guide the work and vision of the organisation.

The function of risk management lies with the trustees and is reviewed on a regular basis.

### **Charitable Objects and Objectives**

The Objects of the charity as set out in our governing document are:

The advancement of the Christian faith in Stonehouse and the Severn Vale west of Stroud in such ways as the trustees think fit including through pastoral care and outreach into the community as a means of carrying out the mission and outreach work of the faith, for the benefit of the public.

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### **Achievements during the year 2024 - 2025**

The Fig Tree has continued to flourish and develop from our base in the centre of Stonehouse High Street.

A practical focus of our work this year has been to establish a more sustainable model to help ensure that The Fig Tree can continue to serve Stonehouse. At the start of the year we negotiated an extension to our original three-year lease, securing our premises up to Spring 2027. At the same time we encouraged supporters to join a regular donors scheme, which has helped to provide the charity with a reliable income. We are grateful to all those who support us financially, which this year included the students of Wycliffe College who adopted us as their 'charity of the year'. We have also conducted some research about those who purchase greetings cards: over 70% are regularly returning customers who understand that they are making a positive contribution to our work by buying our cards. Card sales will never cover our costs, but we are pleased to see a growing number of loyal customers and a steady increase in sales as continue to build a reputation for service and quality.

During the year we successfully recruited a part-time employee to work alongside our voluntary manager, in maintaining activities and supporting our volunteer team. A robust recruitment process led to the appointment of a very capable co-ordinator: this additional capacity has allowed us to offer a wider range of activities through the week and made every part of our operation more secure.

Everything that happens at the Fig Tree is only possible because of our amazing team of over 30 volunteers, most of them committed to at least one weekly session either selling cards or leading and supporting activity groups. There has been a very low level of natural turnover as people's circumstances have changed, but we have had a steady flow of new people keen to be part of our team.

Our activities have continued to develop: the Language Support sessions have attracted a greater range of nationalities/languages and it has been a source of real joy to everyone to note the variety of nationalities represented across all our activity groups. The Fig Tree is a genuine bridge across potential dividing lines in our community. In the approach to Christmas, as well as facilitating the filling and collection of 'Christmas Shoe Box' gifts in co-operation with the 'Teams4U' charity,

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we held an evening of carols and ran a special 'Let's Get Cooking' course focussed on seasonal recipes. Other groups such as 'Babies', 'After School' and 'Dads and Children' have continued to thrive, and our monthly 'Memory Cafe' remains one of the few support groups for people living with dementia in the area.

Good governance remains a key foundation for all that we do, and we have been pleased to welcome a new trustee to the board and have also strengthened our range of policies, partly to reflect our new status as an employer.

### **Priorities for 2025 - 2026**

With a stronger leadership team now in place and the security of a longer lease the coming year should see more activity groups launched at the Fig Tree. We will continue to serve the marginalised and hurting of our town and intend to build on our work in the 'Memory Cafe' with support for carers more generally and to offer more sustained support to those grieving after bereavement.

We will also continue to build on our links across the town, especially with the Town Council and health professionals keen to use us for 'social prescribing'. We will continue to seek out sources of funding to enable us to continue to operate in the town.

### **Public Benefit**

The Trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the aims and objectives and in planning future activities.

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Opening Balance 06/04/24: £24,512

### **INCOME**

Retail Sales £16,761

Donations £4,900

Grants £2,606

Gift Aid £132

**TOTAL £24,399**

### **EXPENDITURE**

Rent -£13,203

Staff Costs -£7,274

Insurance/fees -£1,255

Cost of Sales -£9,552

Consumables -£257

Phone/IT -£416

Other Expenses -£150

**TOTAL -£32,108**

**NET CASH FLOW -£7,709**

Closing Balance  
(05/04/2025)

**£16,803**

# **The Fig Tree Project [Stonehouse]**

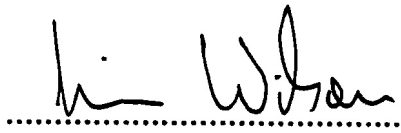
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The financial statements on page 6 were approved by the Trustees, and authorised for issue on 2nd October 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



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Irwin Wilson - Chair of Trustees