



**TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
and
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2025

Friends of Buxton International Festival CIO
Registered Charity Number 1184840

(incorporating Friends of Buxton Festival
Registered Charity Number 513970)

Friends of Buxton International Festival
CIO No. 1184840
Year ended 31 October 2025

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Friends of Buxton International Festival CIO Number 1184840

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

TRUSTEES:	Tony Parsons (Chair) John Gaunt (Secretary and vice-chair) Mandy Travis (Treasurer) Judy Barker (Membership Secretary) Joan Matthews Louise Potter MBE DL (Events Secretary) Helen Brown Ettie Williams Rees Webster Lindsay Crowe
MEETING OBSERVERS:	Wyn Davies (Patron) Chris Barron (Buxton Festival Foundation) Felicity Goodey CBE DL (Chairman, Buxton International Festival) Michael Williams (Chief Executive, Buxton International Festival) Lee Barnes (Administrator)
FRIENDS' OFFICE:	3 The Square Buxton Derbyshire SK17 6AZ
BANKERS:	Cooperative Bank PLC 1 Balloon Street Manchester M60 4EP Manchester Credit Union 24 Queen Street Manchester M2 5HX Mansfield Building Society Regent House Regent Street Mansfield NG18 1SS

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT – YEAR ENDING 31 OCTOBER 2025

IMPORTANT NOTE

This Annual Report relates to the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), the Friends of Buxton International Festival (No. 1184840) which incorporates the Friends of Buxton Festival (No. 513970).

CHARITY CONSTITUTION AND OBJECTS

The Friends of Buxton International Festival is a registered charity, number 1184840, the governing instrument being its Constitution registered 9 August 2019.

The object of the charity is to advance the arts for the public benefit by supporting the Buxton Arts Festival Ltd. by any means as the trustees determine.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The Charity has due regard for the Charity Commission guidance on Public Benefit through its dedicated support of the Buxton International Festival, which produces opera and a wide range of jazz, musical and literary performances for the benefit of the general public, and which also provides a substantial outreach programme for the benefit of schools, the local community and young artists and instrumentalists.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

The business of the Friends is managed by a committee, who are the Trustees of the charity and who maintain strategic oversight and financial control. Three sub-committees covering Governance, Events and Membership continue to serve the charity's needs well. Events and Membership are reported fully below. Governance developments have included the ongoing review (when needed) of the various policies which have historically been adopted. This includes the annual review of the reserves policy – see below.

We rely on a strong and active team of trustees. All Trustees have continued in place but Pete Spriggs, Judy Barker and Louise Potter had all retired by rotation and Judy Barker and Louise Potter offered themselves for re-election and were re-elected at the 2024 AGM. Lindsay Crowe was elected as a new trustee at the 2024 AGM.

The Friends are one of three parties, together with the Festival Company and the Festival Foundation, investing in the success of Buxton International Festival. We are pleased to report that collaboration across these three groups remains extremely strong. The presence of representatives from the Festival, Foundation and Friends as observers at meetings of the Trustees, enables a strategic focus to be shared across all three organisations. An Audit and Risk Committee, which includes representatives from the Festival,

Foundation and Friends, regularly meets to provide some financial oversight to the Festival operations and plans.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The year covered by this report saw a full-scale 2025 Festival to much critical acclaim. The music series in particular was exceptional in terms of ticket sales and the audiences generally were encouraged by the range and quality of performances on offer. Trustees have however remained focused on the core purpose of raising funds for the Festival, sustaining levels of membership and ensuring the Charity's compliance with Charity Commission and HMRC regulations and guidance.

Raising Funds for the Festival

With great credit to all our members and their very generous donations, we were able to provide the Festival with £225,000 towards the costs of running the Festival, including a draw down of reserves held by the Friends for the Festival of £45,000. No reserves are now held by the Friends for the Festival.

The bulk of the Friends' income comes from membership subscriptions and the attendant gift aid, supplemented by occasional donations and normal profits from events and holidays (see below). Subscription rates were increased by an average of 9% in October 2024 for the year 2024-2025, the first increase since 2019. As at the year-end, there were 2043 Friends (2363 in 2024). No further subscription increase is in prospect for a period of three years until the 2027-2028 membership year.

The proportion of subscriptions being paid by Direct Debit grew once again which helps enormously in terms of efficiencies relating to the annual membership renewals. Every opportunity to promote Direct Debit payment is sought though it is expected that this proportion will now plateau.

Supporting the Festival Foundation

Buxton Festival Foundation was set up by the Friends many years ago as the endowment fund for the Festival. Over the years the Foundation has supported the Festival in many ways including loans and grants to the Festival and the Friends' trustees enjoy a close relationship with the trustees of the Foundation. There is a continuing focus on looking to help promote possible legacies, essential for the continued development of the endowment fund and it is readily acknowledged that there should be appropriate recognition of any legacy received, in accordance with agreed Legacies Policy, jointly adopted by the Friends and Foundation, a copy of which policy is always available on request.

Sustaining Levels of Membership

Our success depends on our ability to attract, to satisfy and to retain a strong membership; and to encourage existing members to upgrade to a higher level of membership. We also need to increase our efforts to broaden the

age profile of our membership. The number of under 35 Next Generation Friends continues to grow allowing this cohort to purchase the majority of Festival event tickets for £10. At the year-end there were 536 (387 in 2024) 'Next Gen' Friends.

The continuing generous willingness of some members to upgrade their membership ensured that our membership income remained healthy as evidenced in the accounts.

It is essential that we keep our members well informed and engaged. Efforts to provide timely and varied communication with members consisted of both formal newsletters (Overture) and email updates. With the indispensable help of the Festival Company staff, we continue to make ever-increasing use of social media to maintain a regular flow of information to members. There remains a small, but important, cohort of Friends who do not want, or are not able, to receive electronic communication. Collated printed summaries of the information sent is mailed to them separately throughout the year.

Direct collaboration with the Festival team is key to our attracting new members. We will look to maintain a presence - both to meet and greet existing members and personally to promote the Friends - at all Festival events in 2026, something we were pleased to be able to do again during 2025.

Friends Days were held on each Wednesday of the Festival and provided an important opportunity to reconnect with existing Friends and recruit new Friends. Receptions for Friends were also held on the same days with the opportunity to meet the artists and we were delighted to see many Friends there. We were grateful to the members of the Young Artists and Young Instrumentalists programmes for their performances during the two Friends Days with growing audiences for these recitals.

The trustees are constantly looking for new strategies to attract more members but we know that, ultimately, it is the quality and reputation of the Festival itself which has the greatest impact. The quality and breadth of the 2025 Festival (and indeed other recent Festivals) have helped significantly in this regard.

FRIENDS EVENTS NOVEMBER 2024 - OCTOBER 2025

Aside from the Friends Days at the Festival, and the Festival itself, there were numerous opportunities during the year for Friends events. Events which had been held included a coffee morning and talk at Thorneycroft, an opera discovery day in anticipation of the 2025 Festival, music and poetry at Lydgate, a jazz evening at The Rookery and a lunch and piano recital at Biggin Hall.

Events for 2026 include another coffee morning and talk at Thorneycroft (13 March), a harpsichord recital at the Cloister House, Blithfield (18 April) and a recital at Snitterton Hall (11 June). Huge thanks should be noted to those who provide venues (often their homes) to host events for the Friends.

Thanks should also be given to the catering team which supports the events committee, generously giving their time and commitment to many Friends' events.

THE VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION

The contribution of the trustees is not restricted to managing the business of the charity; they also make a huge personal and voluntary contribution by directly supporting the activities of the Friends. Augmented by a wider band of other volunteers, they provide invaluable direct support for the Festival Company both normally during the Festival itself but also with other essential tasks throughout the year.

THE WISHES AND VIEWS OF OUR MEMBERS

The Friends of Buxton International Festival is one of the most successful organisations of its kind in the UK thanks, first and foremost, to the generosity and unstinting support of all our members and their vital commitment to the success of the Festival. It is essential that the trustees understand and respond as well as possible to the wishes and views of members. In addition to the opportunities provided by the AGM and this Report, we always welcome, and respond to, comments, feedback and suggestions.

RESERVES POLICY

The Charity's Reserves Policy was re-confirmed at the Friends Board meeting on 13 November 2025 as follows:

- a) The main financial activity of the Charity is to pass funds raised through membership, other donations and fund-raising events to the Buxton Arts Festival Ltd; these outgoings are therefore wholly dependent on the level of income and do not present a risk.
- b) A secondary activity, which carries a small risk, involves providing events which involve income and expenditure.
- c) Beyond this, the only expenses for which the Charity is normally liable are professional fees, charges and administrative and marketing costs; these expenses are normally covered by a small percentage of the fund-raising income.
- d) The trustees have agreed that a reserve of £25,000 is sufficient to cover those elements of the annual turnover described in paragraphs b. and c. above for one year, should there be any interruption to income arising from fund-raising.
- e) If there is no prospect in any financial year of the reserved funds being required for any liability under b. or c. above, the trustees may agree to transfer up to £15,000 of the Reserve to the Festival Company if

requested to assist with a short-term cash flow requirement. Any such depletion of the reserve will be made good in the following year's budget. This is separate and apart from other funds from time to time set aside and available for the Festival to draw upon if required.

- f) The rationale and level of this reserve will be reviewed annually.

RISK MANAGEMENT

To protect the operational objectives of the charity and to prevent a reduction in income and administrative breakdown the Committee has taken the following measures, above and beyond maintaining a comprehensive Risk Register:

- To hold regular meetings of the committee.
- To maintain a computerised bookkeeping package, regularly written up for income and expenditure, to give an accurate and up-to-date position of the Friends' financial affairs.
- To require two authorisations to approve all payments and sign all cheques.
- To maintain a public and products liability insurance policy.
- To submit annually the accounts of the charity to independent examination.
- To appoint and receive advice from an experienced firm of professional accountants.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Income for the year was £ 203,420. Expenditure for the year was £ 242,279 which included grants in direct or indirect support of Buxton International Festival of £ 225,000 (including £ 10,000 to support the discounted tickets for Next Generation Friends). The result for the year was a deficit of £ 38,860 leaving unrestricted monies at 31 October 2025 of £ 33,367.

TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the charity's financial activities during the year and of its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed subject to any 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 business.

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

Friends of Buxton International Festival
Registered Charity Number - 1184840
Year ended 31 October 2025

Statement of Financial Activities

	Note	2025	2024
		£	£
Income			
Membership subscriptions		142,598	142,083
Donations		11,603	13,204
Income tax refunds		34,179	31,843
Proceeds from fund raising and social events	2	9,208	6,197
Legacies received			
Other income		618	995
Bank interest & dividends		5,215	5,183
Total income		203,420	199,505
Expenditure			
Cost of generating funds -			
Costs of fundraising and social events	2	6,668	7,554
Administration and other overheads			
Postage, print and stationery		3,065	2,840
Insurance and IT costs		1,289	1,576
Bank and credit card charges		1,977	1,877
Professional charges		3,378	3,162
Trustee expenses and meeting costs		884	1,589
Sundry expenses		19	46
Total administration and other overheads		10,611	11,090
Total surplus after costs and overheads		186,140	180,861
Distribution of surplus			
Payments in support of Buxton Arts Festival Ltd	3	225,000	200,000
Net income/(outgoing) for the year		-38,860	-19,139
Accumulated fund at beginning of year		72,226	91,365
Accumulated fund at end of year		33,367	72,226

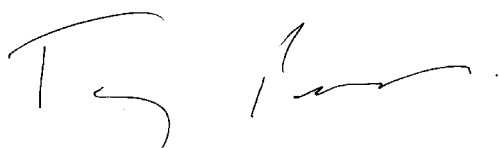
Friends of Buxton International Festival
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Balance Sheet

	Note	2025	2024
		£	£
Current assets			
Debtors and prepayments	4	1,826	-
Cash at bank and in hand		41,289	77,134
		43,115	77,134
Current Liabilities			
Amounts falling due within one year			
Creditors and accruals	5	9,748	4,908
Net assets		33,367	72,226
Represented by:			
Accumulated fund - unrestricted	6	33,367	72,226

Approved by the Trustees on 7-01-2026

And signed on their behalf by:



Chairman

I. Accounting policies

1.1 Accounting convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the charity's scheme of the Charity Commissioners 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 (FRS 102)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from January 2016). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The accounts 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 Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The accounts are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the accounts, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus, the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the accounts.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

1.4 Voluntary income is received by way of subscriptions and donations and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable.

1.5 Resources expended are included on an accruals basis and are recognized where there is a legal or constructive obligation to pay for expenditure and include VAT, which is not recoverable.

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2. Proceeds and Costs of Fundraising and social events

	Proceeds		Costs		Surplus/(Deficit)	
	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fund raising events						
Social events (inc AGM)	9,208	6,197	6,668	7,554	2,540	-1,357
Merchandising						0
Commission on opera holidays					0	0
	9,208	6,197	6,668	7,554	2,540	-1,357

3. Payments to the Festival Company

Payments in support of Buxton Arts Festival Limited this year were £225,000 (2024 £200,000)

4. Debtors

	2025	2024
	£	£
Prepaid Event Expenditure	1,746	-
Gift Vouchers	80	-
	1,826	-

5. Creditors -Amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade creditors	400	384
Subscriptions in advance	9,348	4,524
Accruals and other creditors	9,748	4,908

6. Accumulated Funds

The Charity's balance on its accumulated fund at 31 October 2025 is regarded as unrestricted.

7. Trustees

None of the Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits from the Charity. Payments to reimburse Trustees for expenses accounted to £Nil (2024 - £Nil).

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Friends of Buxton International Festival

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 October 2025.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The trustees (who are also the directors of the company) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an Independent Examination is needed. The charity's gross income has not exceeded £250,000. I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of ICAEW.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act
- Follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the 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

In connection with my examination, no matters have come to my attention:

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - To keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006
 - To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities

Have not been met; or

2. To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Name: 

Relevant Professional qualification or body: ICAEW

Address: 6 Manchester Road, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 9SB

Date: 16-01-2026