



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

		Period start date			Period end date		
From	09	10	2019	To	31	03	2021

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name

The Poetry Exchange

Other names charity is known by

Registered charity number (if any) 1185714

Charity's principal address

26 Monument Court

Woolners Way

Stevenage

Postcode

SG1 3AD

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	John Prebble	Secretary		
2	Fiona Bennett			
3	Alison McManus	Chair		
4	Roy McFarlane			

Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document
(eg. trust deed, constitution)

Constitution

How the charity is constituted
(eg. trust, association, company)

Charitable Incorporation Organisation

Trustee selection methods
(eg. appointed by, elected by)

Appointed by current trustees at meeting, for minimum of 3 years

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;

- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

Section C

Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

The objects of the CIO are:

To advance the arts and culture, in particular poetry, for the public benefit, by producing events and activities that promote the public's engagement with and appreciation of poetry, for the general public around the UK and worldwide.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

The Poetry Exchange carries out a wide range of public events and activities that allow people from all walks of life to explore and connect with poetry. Over 2020-21 we have have run our activities online as well as in person when possible, maintaining many forms of public engagement with our work, in spite of the pandemic.

The main activities undertaken towards our charitable objects have been:

- Public events that invite people to read, share and explore poems together – revealing and celebrating how poems speak powerfully and personally to people in their lives. Our events & activities range from individual conversations to large-scale gatherings and performances, taking place in libraries, festivals, arts centres and other public spaces – as well as online. We seek to offer something for everyone – whether they are avid poetry readers or people coming to poetry for the first time.
- An award-winning podcast and digital programme that reaches thousands of people around the world – sharing the stories of people's connection with poems as friends and opening up poetry to a much wider audience. (Silver Award, Most Original Podcast, British Podcast Awards).
- Workshops and interventions in various public settings, exploring the possibilities of poetry as a form of social encounter – creating shared experiences with poems in universities, workplaces, wellbeing groups, community centres and more.
- Building a diverse community of poetry lovers, brought together through our wide-ranging work with poems as friends – readers, artists, listeners, followers, event-goers and more. We maintain & support this community through regular events, gatherings, newsletters, social media and more.

The Poetry Exchange's trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

The Poetry Exchange is not a grant-making organisation, nor does it have any investments at this stage.

Whilst we aim to pay our team and associates professional rates, our work benefits from a wide range of voluntary and in-kind support e.g. our network of associate artists promoting our work widely; partners and supporters hosting activities in their properties or venues in-kind; our producing team putting in a lot of additional, voluntary time when launching or developing new initiatives.

Section D

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

Summary

Whilst the pandemic inevitably had a major impact on our work in 2020-21, this was also a very fruitful time for The Poetry Exchange, as we continuously adapted our work to new formats and technologies, offering thousands of people around the world community & connection with poems as friends during a very challenging time.

Digital innovation

The Poetry Exchange has always offered a mix of online and in-person encounters with poetry, so we were quickly able to adapt our work to reach people as fully as possible over 2020-21. Innovations included:

- Hosting conversations with readers from around the world – making the experience of The Poetry Exchange more widely available than ever before.
- Live-streaming major events such as ‘In The Company of Poems’, which brought some of the best voices and poems in the world directly into people’s homes (*“the cultural highlight of my lockdown”* as one audience member put it).
- Maintaining and supporting our diverse community of readers, writers, associate artists, partner organisations and followers, through regular online gatherings e.g. ‘Bring A Poem Nights’ and poetry lunch hours. *“These sessions have been a life-line for me, as an artist and as a person living through this.”*

As a team we have combined our growing digital skills with a deep and nuanced curatorial approach to poetry – allowing us create a wide range of powerful yet accessible experiences that have kept people feeling human and connected during the pandemic:

“Sharing poetry as a vehicle for human intimacy in a difficult time.”

“The incredible voices are all still resonating with me now. Thank you for making an otherwise ordinary night EXTRAORDINARY.”

Widening reach

As the words above make clear, there has been an incredible public response to The Poetry Exchange’s work this year. We have seen a vast increase in our audience during 2020-21, as more and more people turn to our work with poetry as a source of deeper understanding and closer connection in their lives. Our podcast listening figures grew by over 12,000 to 37k listens worldwide – creating countless moments of intimacy and honesty during the upheaval of people’s lives this year.

Section D

Achievements and performance

We also invested in a full re-brand across all our work and channels – collaborating with Duzi Studios to create a tender yet contemporary design that chimes with and communicates the essence of The Poetry Exchange to wider audiences.

Fundraising successes

In spite of the pressures people were facing, we also saw the warmth and support from our community translate into increased private giving. Spurred on by our new, flagship fundraising event – In The Company Of Poems – we raised £5,766 in individual donations.

Artistic highlights

Our Artistic Director Fiona Bennett curated and directed the poetry for an astonishing new piece by Ballet Black - Then Or Now – featuring the poetry of Adrienne Rich. Rich's poetry is voiced by The Poetry Exchange associate artists Michael Shaeffer, Natasha Gordon and Hafsah Bashir.

The piece was due to be premiered at the Barbican Centre in March but was postponed due to the Covid-19 lockdown. However, in May we were thrilled to release the poem-score to this new ballet as our first Special Episode of The Poetry Exchange podcast. This collaboration is a shining exemplar of the powerful, interdisciplinary work with poetry that our team can create, and we look forward to more unique co-productions like these in the coming years.

We are proud to have shared a wonderful range of voices and stories on The Poetry Exchange podcast this year – featuring well known figures and members of the public alike. Our guests have included actor Brian Cox, writers Stephen Beresford and Rachel Eliza Griffiths, as well as students, publishers, teachers, parents and more. We have heard life-changing stories of loss, motherhood, childhood, resilience, feminism, hope and beauty – all told through people's intimate friendships with poems by Maya Angelou, Dylan Thomas, Emily Dickinson, Philip Larkin and many more.

Section E

Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The Poetry Exchange seeks to build a reserve of four months' operating costs in place. As 2020-21 was our first financial period of operation, this is currently an ambition that the Trustees will set a strategy around during the current financial year (2022-23).

Details of any funds materially in deficit

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);

Please see attached accounts for breakdown of funds and expenditure during the period 09/10/2019 – 31/03/2021.

- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

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Section F

Other optional information

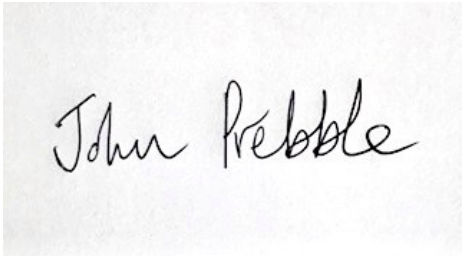
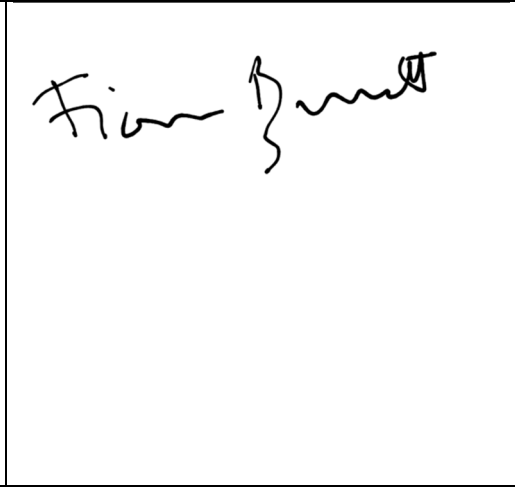
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Section G

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)	 			
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Full name(s)</td> <td>John Prebble</td> <td>Fiona Bennett</td> </tr> </table>		Full name(s)	John Prebble
Full name(s)	John Prebble	Fiona Bennett		
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Secretary</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		Secretary	
Secretary				
Date	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>30.01.2022</td> </tr> </table>		30.01.2022	
30.01.2022				



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

The Poetry Exchange

1185714

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

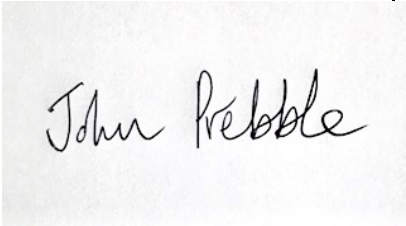

For the period from	09/10/2019	To	31/03/2021
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Arts Council England National Lottery Grant	-	24,030	-	24,030	
Fees for charitable work	4,629		-	4,629	
Fundraising event	2,432		-	2,432	
Individual donations	3,334		-	3,334	
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	10,395	24,030	-	34,425	
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	
Total receipts	10,395	24,030	-	34,425	
A3 Payments					
Artists' fees & expenses for charitable work	2,977	3,947	-	6,924	
Venue hire & materials for charitable work	400	1,468	-	1,868	
Staffing - producing & marketing	875	5,470	-	6,345	
Staffing - digital production	1,446	7,229	-	8,675	
Other freelance support		1,000	-	1,000	
Advertising & promotion	472	1,008	-	1,480	
Software, subscriptions, insurance	837	1,934	-	2,771	
Sub total	7,007	22,056	-	29,063	
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	
Total payments	7,007	22,056	-	29,063	
Net of receipts/(payments)	3,388	1,974		5,362	
A5 Transfers between funds					
A6 Cash funds last year end	20	-	-	20	
Cash funds this year end	3,408	1,974		5,382	

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

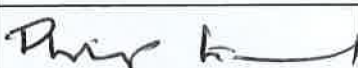
Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds				-
	Total cash funds	3,408	1,974	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))			
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
	Details	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
		John Prebble	31.12.2021
		Fiona Bennett	31.12.2021



**CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES**

**Independent
examiner's
report on the
accounts**

Section A		Independent Examiner's Report	
Report to the trustees/ members of		The Poetry Exchange	
On accounts for the period ended	31 March 2021	Charity no (if any)	1185714
Set out on pages		1 and 2 <small>(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)</small>	
Responsibilities and basis of report	<p>I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity for the period ended 31/03/2021.</p> <p>As the charity trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").</p> <p>I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.</p>		
<u>Independent examiner's statement</u>	<p>I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records. <p>I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.</p>		
Signed:		Date:	24/5/21
Name:		Mr Philip Gambrell FCCA	

	PG Lemon LLP
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
Address:	134 High Street
	Hythe
	Kent, CT21 5LB

Section B

Disclosure

	Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).
Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.	N/A.