



Inspiring music in the heart of West Somerset

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

02.09.24 – 01.09.25

The Board of Trustees has pleasure in presenting their annual report and financial statements for the period ended 1 September 2025.

Reference & Administration Details

Charity name	Dunster Festival
Registered charity number	1193491
Date of registration	February 11 2021
Principal address	Dunster Festival 25 Sherrards Way London EN5 2BW
Trustees	Alastair Bruce McIntosh (Chair) Sarah Gordon Joyce Roscoe Jasmine Bourne Richard Pearce Murray Botes
Artistic Directors	Rachel Wick Rory McCleery
Bankers	NatWest Bank 9 The Parade Minehead TA24 5NL

Structure, Governance & Management

Type of governing document Constitution

How the charity is constituted CIO

New trustees are appointed by the existing charity trustees by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the board.

Objectives & Activities

The objects as stated in its governing document, and for which the charity was established, are:

The advancement of the arts and culture, and the education of the public in the art of music, in particular but not limited to chamber music, for the public benefit by:

- a) The presentation of concerts and other musical activities, chiefly as part of an annual festival in West Somerset; and
- b) Training and coaching for those from all demographics and age groups (particularly but not exclusively for young people)

The Trustees are aware of the Public Benefit provisions of the Charities Act 2011 and of the guidance on them published by the Charity Commission. They are satisfied that the objects and the activities of the Charity are within the definitions of Charitable Purposes as set down in the Act, and in making decisions pertaining to this activity and when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant they have had due regard to both.

Dunster Festival carries out its purpose to advance the arts and education for the public benefit by:

- a) organising an annual festival of high quality concerts and performances, including repertoire which otherwise would not be performed widely, which this year took place between May 23 and 26 2025.
- b) working with young people in schools, the elderly in care homes and those with special educational needs in day centres, and amateur musicians from a variety of walks of life, introducing them to new repertoire and enabling them to enjoy music and develop and improve their musical skills.

Achievements & Performance

While some aspects of our 2025 community & outreach work were slightly scaled back on the previous few years, with a variety of factors (the departure of key contacts at both local Middle Schools, slightly less success with project-specific funding applications, some logistical/scheduling difficulties) contributing to this, we were excited to pilot a new community-centred event as part of the Festival weekend, allowing us to reach new and far larger audiences than previously: during the day on Monday 27 May 2025 we held our first ever Dunster Festival Fête. The Fête, which took place in one of our key Festival venues, the historic Tithe Barn in Dunster, and in the village gardens surrounding it, was free to attend, and across the day more than 500 visitors (many of whom had no prior experience of Dunster Festival) had the opportunity to experience high-quality live music and engaging performances in a convivial setting with food vendors and local craftspeople.



Luis Martelo & Knotted Aerial perform at the inaugural Dunster Festival Fête

We also provided pupils at Danesfield Middle school with a day of choral workshops, engaging Year 5 students and introducing them to the sound world and expressive possibilities of a cappella vocal music in sessions led by acclaimed vocal ensemble The Marian Consort. Students were encouraged to think about how they could express themselves musically using their own voices through various warm-ups, singing games and songs, and each session culminated in the performance of a piece of Renaissance polyphony, with the Year 5 students singing their part alongside the professional musicians. They were then given the opportunity to ask questions at the end of the session.

Jackie Shave, former leader of Britten Sinfonia and in-demand touring and session violinist, led a workshop supported by three other professional musicians for the pupils of Dunster First School, demonstrating the sounds and explaining the workings of a variety of orchestral instruments and encouraging the students to listen creatively and to participate in making music themselves.

As has been experienced previously, implementing projects of this nature is always challenging and relies to an extent on the goodwill of individuals in our partner organisations, as the environment within these partner organisations (schools in particular) is one where staff have many demands on their time and energy, and where they are often overstretched and under-resourced.

This was again particularly true this year, with continuing and increased difficulties liaising with our schools partners, due to changes of personnel and staff shortages, but the feedback from both staff and students was hugely positive, and is excerpted below:

"The Festival has been a partner of ours for several years now, providing high quality, free of charge (thanks to their fundraising work) musical workshops and longer-term projects for our Year 5 and 6 students, enabling them to learn from and perform alongside professional musicians of international calibre, a highlight of the partnership. Their involvement has had a profoundly positive impact on our pupils, boosting their confidence and providing them with the unique opportunity to experience professional singing. Their inspiring workshops introduced the children to Renaissance vocal music, the concept of singing together, and the different voice types found in a choir. They actively participated in music-making, learning, and singing a round together.

We greatly value this partnership and look forward to continuing and growing our collaboration with Dunster Festival in the future." **Senior Administrator, Danesfield School**

"The children all really enjoyed the music performance. When we came back to class they had lots of ideas and thoughts that they wanted to share (about the music, instruments, pitch and volume). They particularly enjoyed the interactive nature of your performance. Thank you!" **Class Teacher, Dunster First School**



"I learnt about dynamics, going loud and quiet" Elliot

"I think the best part of the workshop was when we did the performance altogether. I also really enjoyed hearing the professional singers" Megan



"I enjoyed when we sang the songs and got the chance to conduct them ourselves. It was really fun hearing them and learning about music" Daniel

"My favourite thing was the singing because I had never heard it live before" Matthew

Our live festival from May 25 to 27 2025 comprised 9 events (an increase on 2024) which took place both in Dunster (St George's Church and the historic Tithe Barn) and in Watchet, the latter once again hosted by our partner organisation East Quay, a collaboration which has proven successful in building diverse audiences and reaching more of our local community with high-quality live music. Despite the weather requiring the performers be moved indoors, the family concert at East Quay attracted a large and engaged audience, seated both outside and inside the café.



Jackie Shave & Robert Irvine family performance at East Quay, Watchet

Artists featured included internationally renowned instrumentalists Jackie Shave, Robert Irvine and Clare Finnimore, the Antara Flute & Harp Duo, early music specialists Elspeth Piggott and Kristiina Watt, vocal ensemble The Marian Consort and Spiritato baroque orchestra, performing a diverse range of styles and repertoire spanning eight centuries. The choral workshop once again proved extremely popular, with both local singers and some who had travelled from as far as Cornwall, Manchester and London (speaking to the Festival's reputation) enjoying the acoustics of the Tithe Barn and the opportunity to work together with our Artistic Co-Director and choral music expert Rory McCleery in a friendly and relaxed environment.

Feedback from audiences was extremely positive, with average numbers up from 2024 (taking into account the greater number of events in 2025), and our artists were very appreciative of the opportunity to experience what it is that makes Dunster Festival so unique.

Sample Audience feedback:

"Dunster Festival is amazing – everyone here is made to feel so welcome, and that is what contributes to amazing musical performances and experiences that everyone can share"

"It brings together some amazingly talented musicians, it's in a fabulous place and you get children in the audience, which is really unusual for a classical audience"

"I love the atmosphere, it's nice and bubbly, everyone's smiley: the concert was really good, I found that really cool"

"Well, Dunster Festival is amazing because of the programme mix, the high quality of the music-making, and of course this beautiful medieval town"



Dunster Festival Audience 2025

We have had three retirements from the trustee board - David Godsal (chair), Stephen Clayton and Jess Prendergast. David, Stephen and Jess have all been involved from the Festival's earliest days and remain keen supporters; we are very grateful for the experience and wisdom they have brought to the board and this allows them to step down with the Festival on a sound footing. We are fortunate to have welcomed four new trustees - Murray Botes, Jasmine Bourne, Richard Pearce and Joy Roscoe. Working with the Artistic Directors, it is the trustees' ambition that the Festival continues to grow, expanding its concert programme and further developing its outreach work within the local community.

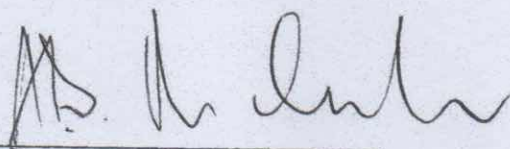
Financial Review

Dunster Festival is endeavouring, despite the difficult present financial conditions, to build up reserves, with a reserves-building strategy under regular review. Our reserves at year end were £16,662, sufficient to meet the charity's financial commitments and to support the long-term development of the Festival.

Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AB. McIntosh', written over a horizontal line.

Trustee

Alastair Bruce McIntosh, Chair

19.02.26



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name
Dunster Festival

On accounts for the year
ended

01.09.25

Charity no
(if any)

1193491

Set out on pages

1-2 attached

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **01/09/2025**.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the 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.

Independent
examiner's statement

~~[The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of applicable listed body]]. Delete [] if not applicable.~~

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.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

M Barker

Date:

11/5/26

Name:

P J N BARKER

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body

ICAEW (retired)

(if any):

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Address:

Stable Cottage, Triscombe

Bishops Lydeard, Somerset

TA43HG

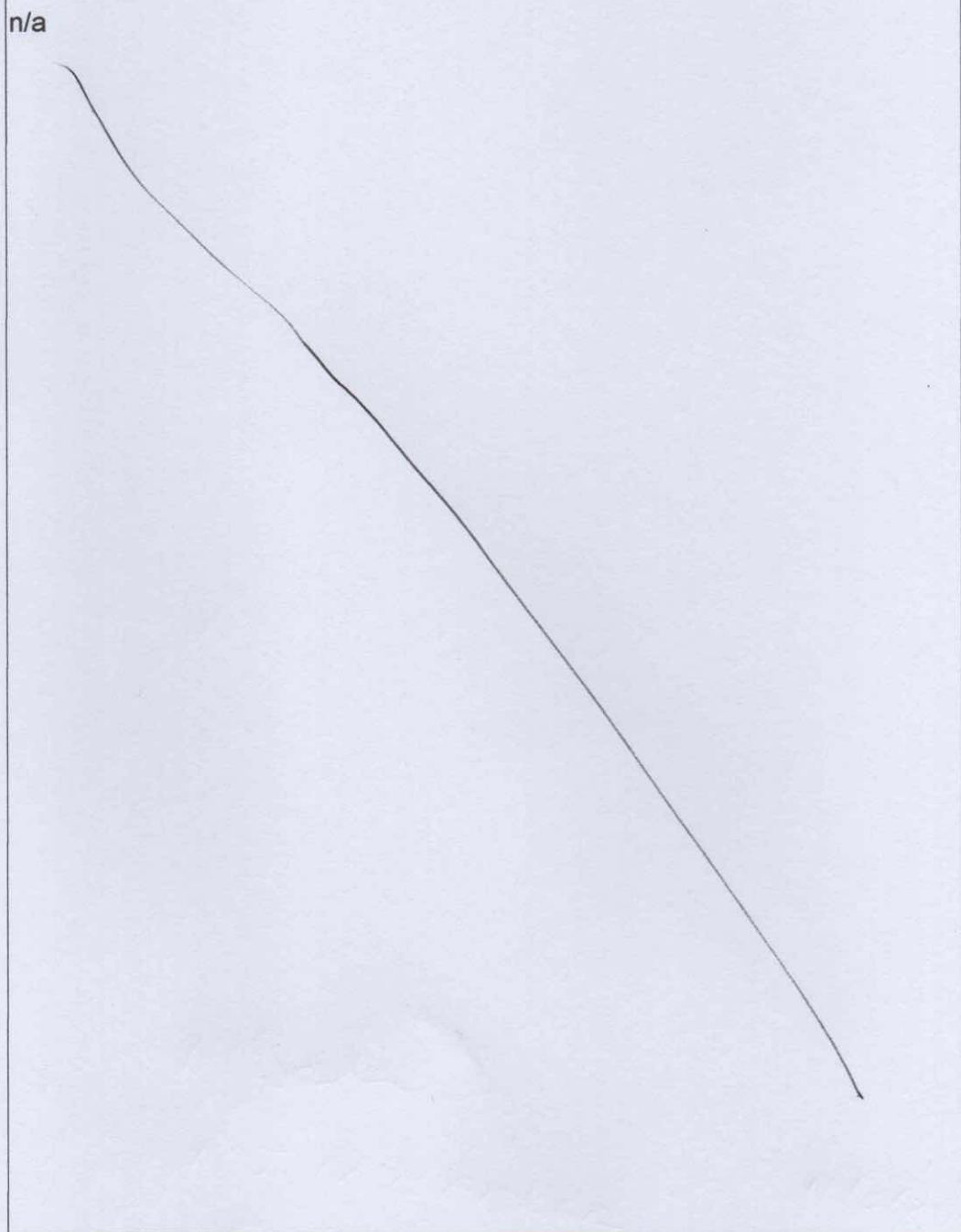
Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material 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





Receipts and payments accounts

For the period

2.9.24

To

1.9.25

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					
Donations, legacies and grants	18,125	6,300	-	24,425	16,600
Ticket sales	8,845	-	-	8,845	6,133
Partner income	2,045	-	-	2,045	600
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	29,015	6,300	-	35,315	23,333
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	29,015	6,300	-	35,315	23,333
A3 Payments					
Website and software	1,051	-	-	1,051	947
Printing postage and stationery	998	-	-	998	513
Insurance	219	-	-	219	178
Artist costs	17,970	6,300	-	24,270	16,958
Event costs	3,629	-	-	3,629	2,855
Advertising	761	-	-	761	-
Staff costs	3,171	-	-	3,171	-
Photography	1,045	-	-	1,045	783
Other	610	-	-	610	-
Sub total	29,453	6,300	-	35,753	22,234
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	29,453	6,300	-	35,753	22,234
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 438	-	-	- 438	1,099
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	17,100	-	-	17,100	16,001
Cash funds this year end	16,662	-	-	16,662	17,100

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				
	Cash held on 1.9.25	16,662	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	16,662	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account (s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets				
		-	-	-

	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-

B3 Investment assets

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

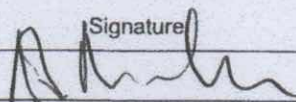
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	AB McINTOSH	11/5/26