



WHIDDON AUTUMN FESTIVAL

Charity No: 1195063

ANNUAL REPORT

Trustees' Annual Report (incl. Chairman's Report)

Statement of Income & Expenditure

Balance Sheet

Independent Examiner's Report

2025

Trustees' Annual Report for the Period 1st January 2025 to 31st December 2025

Charity Name: Whiddon Autumn Festival

Registered Charity No: 1195063

Principal Address: 56 The Square, Chagford, Devon TQ13 8AE
(changed Feb 2026 to: Hazelwood, Gidleigh, Chagford, Devon TQ13 8HP)

Trustees: Michael Ball
Freddie Crowley (Festival & Artistic Director)
John Crowley (Chairman)
Neil Loden
Claire O'Donnell (appointed 10 December 2024)
Alison Routh

Apart from the initial Trustees, every Trustee must be appointed for a term of three years by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the Trustees. The initial Trustees have all now been re-appointed under a rolling schedule for further periods of three years.

In selecting individuals for appointment as a Trustee, the Trustees will have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the Charity.

Independent Examiner: Alexander Elkies

Chairman's Report:

This Annual Report of the Whiddon Autumn Festival reports on the charity's year of 2025, covering the annual Festival.

The fifth Whiddon Autumn Festival ("WAF") once again took place over five days in September 2025 and this year covered a total of 15 events. As previously, the principal Festival venues were the five wonderful parish churches in the Chagford area, while other venues included Chagford's Jubilee Hall (for the regular Jazz Night), the Long Room at the Drewe Arms, Drewsteignton's community-owned historic pub (for a show 'blurring the boundaries between folk, jazz and contemporary songwriting' with a related Songwriting Workshop) and Chagford's historic Endecott House (for the now well-established events of the informal Coffee Morning, the Come & Sing Workshop and the Family Concert, as well as the Open Rehearsal – a new event in 2025).

WAF has always prided itself on its broad musical appeal (from the familiar to the challenging, the classical to the cutting-edge contemporary, the ancient to new commissions), its community involvement and its artist collaboration. These defining themes were even more to the fore in 2025, with four world-premiere performances, an extensive schools-based Learning & Engagement programme and a large Come-&-Sing choir of local amateur singers. Most of the 15 events involved collaborations between the various artists, the busiest being members of Corvus Consort, who appeared in eight events, the Festival String Quartet in six and Harry Baker, also in six. The collaborations extended to the school children participants in the L&E programme and the Come-&-Sing choir both performing in concert alongside the professional of Corvus Consort.

Corvus Consort, under their director Freddie Crowley, WAF's Festival and Artistic Director, has firmly established itself as WAF's 'Ensemble-in-Residence', while this year's guest artists were the Delphine Trio. Also guesting was the Kathleen Ferrier Award-winning Scottish tenor Matthew McKinney, whose recital included Schumann's *Dichterliebe*, while Matthew also co-curated the Festival's Scottish-themed closing concert, '*Caledonia*'.

A further guest artist this year was the singer-songwriter Jamie Doe, who appears under the moniker 'The Magic Lantern' and who performed in the Long Room, as well as running a popular songwriting workshop.

This year's sold-out Festival Jazz Night saw the very popular return of Harry Baker and his Trio, though as usual Harry appeared in various guises across the Festival, as he has done every year since the Festival's inception.

Other concerts performed to capacity audiences included the Festival String Quartet's now-traditional Friday morning concert in the beautiful Throwleigh church, Corvus Consort's candlelit concert in Drewsteignton church ('*The Song of Songs*') and The Magic Lantern in the Long Room.

Generally, audience numbers showed a marked increase like-for-like on the previous year, despite the reluctant but necessary increase in ticket prices this year. Also, very gratifyingly in these times of increasing competition for external funding, grant support also increased

impressively from last year. This all resulted in a financially successful year for WAF, which enables our modest financial cushion to creep a little further towards the target of our stated reserves policy.

More details of the 2025 Festival, including a gallery of photos of the individual events and information on past Festivals, can be found in the Archive section of the Whiddon Autumn Festival website.

WAF remains ever-grateful to all its Supporters: the grant-making organisations and local sponsors who helped to fund WAF 2025; the WAF Friends and Patrons, whose support makes the Festival possible and helps WAF to build its reserves to ensure its sustainability for the future; the kind hosts in Chagford who accommodate our musicians; our trustees and administrative team members; all the wonderful volunteers who assist our team in making each Festival run smoothly and successfully; and finally our concert and event audiences, whose numbers continue to grow year by year and without whose generosity and support the Festival could not happen.

Charity's status:

The Charity is constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation under a CIO Foundation Model Constitution approved and adopted by the Trustees on 10 May 2021.

The Charity's organisational structure:

WAF's activities are organised and managed by the Festival Director, who is also the Artistic Director and a Trustee. A small team assists the Festival Director with roles including Administration, Fundraising, Publicity and Learning & Engagement. Also, a team of local volunteers (recruited by the Festival Director) provides accommodation, transport, concert and venue administration, etc, during the period of the Festival.

Apart from the Festival Director, the other Trustees are entirely voluntary and provide high level advice and oversight to ensure good management and governance practice, in support of the Festival Director. The Trustees also provide assistance, in various roles, as required, in the smooth running of the Festival.

Trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them:

The Trustees maintain a Risk Management Schedule, which (a) covers all aspects of the charity's activities (b) identifies and quantifies the risks facing WAF and (c) specifies the measures taken to eliminate or mitigate those risks. The Trustees review the Risk Management Schedule regularly, and at least annually, and are satisfied that all reasonable measures are being taken to reduce risks to an acceptable level.

Objects of the charity as set out in its governing document:

To promote the appreciation, enjoyment, participation and understanding of music and the arts for the public benefit, through the provision of musical events and educational activities, particularly but not exclusively in central Devon as part of an annual Arts Festival and at other times of the year.

Summary of the main activities in relation to these Objects:

WAF has four core aims:

- to present world-class live music in a part of the country that so infrequently sees professional classical music performances;
- to provide a platform for some of the UK's most talented young musicians in the early stages of their professional careers;
- to deliver an inspiring Learning & Engagement programme for local children, encouraging enjoyment and participation in music from an early age and promoting values of teamwork and collectivity through group singing;
- to engage and involve the community by holding participatory events which offer local residents the opportunity to join with our professional artists in a collective performance.

The main activities to achieve these aims are the concerts and other events forming the Whiddon Autumn Festival, held each September in and around the small town of Chagford on the north-east edge of Dartmoor in central Devon.

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during its first five years:

WAF has now established itself as a regular feature of the Devon cultural scene. Since the initial three-day Festival in September 2021, the Festival has continued to grow and WAF 2025 saw 15 events over five days. WAF brings world-class young professional musicians to a corner of Dartmoor that rarely sees such a level of performance and increasingly draws audiences from further afield. It draws in people from across the local parish communities - not just audience members but also school children through WAF's inspirational outreach programme, volunteers to ensure the smooth running of the Festival, keen and 'have-a-go' singers for the Come-&-Sing day, hosts to accommodate the musicians, etc.

An effective administration team has been assembled by the Festival Director, with individuals assisting him in covering most of the main tasks: general administration; learning and engagement; fund-raising; marketing and publicity; Friends and Patrons coordination.

Brief Statement of the charity's policy on reserves:

The Trustees believe that the main purpose of the charity's reserves is to cover any unexpected shortfall in funding and income.

The Trustees consider that a prudent level of reserves would be a minimum of 50% of the previous year's total expenditure.

To achieve and then maintain this level of reserves, the Trustees intend in each financial year to budget for the charity to make a surplus, taking into account the financial outcome of the annual Festival itself and regular annual subscriptions from Friends and Patrons.

Public Benefit:

The Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in planning all WAF's events. The Trustees consider that they have satisfied the criteria of 'public benefit' in the following ways:

- The Festival benefits the communities in the Chagford area, as well as the wider region, by the provision of musical performance and learning and engagement programmes by high quality professional artists in an area that normally sees little of either.
- Members of the community have the opportunity to perform alongside the Festival's professional artists in a collaborative performance. They also volunteer to provide hosting and administrative services to help to ensure the smooth running over the five days of the Festival. Also, the learning and engagement programmes bring the experience of classical music and its live performance to local schoolchildren, including the opportunity for public performance as part of the Festival.
- The Festival places high importance on the encouragement of attendance at, and where possible participation in, the Festival from people from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The ticket pricing for the Festival's events, and especially the provision of free access for children and young people, ensures that they and their families, as well as those on lower incomes, have a reasonable opportunity of attending concerts and events in the Festival.

Payments to Trustees:

WAF's Founder, Festival Director and Artistic Director is Freddie Crowley, who is also a Trustee. This presents potential conflicts, especially with regard to his remuneration, for him and for John Crowley, who is a connected person as his father and is also a Trustee and Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

The intention is for the Festival & Artistic Director to be retained on a rolling annual contract for services. The performance of the Festival & Artistic Director is reviewed annually by the Trustees. Any discussion and decision about the retention and, if so, future remuneration for the Festival & Artistic Director is made solely by the independent Trustees, with no input from the Festival & Artistic Director (should he/she remain a Trustee and whether or not in future that position is held by Freddie Crowley) nor from any connected person of the Festival & Artistic Director among the Trustees.

In 2025, Freddie Crowley received the following remuneration from the Charity:

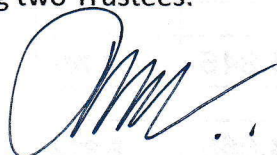
Festival & Artistic Director's fee:	£11,802
Performer's fees:	£1,700

The total fee due to the Festival & Artistic Director for 2025 was £8,603. In addition, a balancing sum of £3,199 in respect of the fee for 2024 was paid in the 2025 accounting year. In setting and agreeing these fees (which is done solely by the independent Trustees), the Trustees are satisfied that they are in line with the normal rates in the sector and for comparable events.

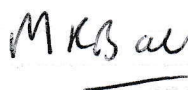
In addition, Freddie Crowley received £148 in reimbursement for travel expenses.

DECLARATION

The Trustees declare that, at a meeting held on 6 May 2026, they approved the Trustees' Annual Report above, they accepted and acknowledged the Independent Examiner's Report below and they authorised the signature of the Report on the Trustees' behalf by the following two Trustees:



.....
John Crowley
Chairman & Trustee



.....
Michael Ball
Trustee

Whiddon Autumn Festival

Receipts & Payments Accounts for the Period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025

Income & Expenditure Statement	2025	2024
RECEIPTS		
Ticket Sales	15,561	16,741
Other event-specific income (donations, programmes, drinks, etc)	3,058	4,103
Other donations	1,272	383
Gift Aid	1,970	996
Friends & Patrons Subscriptions	8,875	5,875
Grants, etc	32,800	27,550
Sponsorships & Programme Adverts	3,525	4,000
Miscellaneous	890	538
TOTAL RECEIPTS	67,951	60,186
PAYMENTS		
Artists Fees	25,128	27,180
Artists Travel & Subsistence	2,998	4,153
Other concert expenses (Lighting, sound, photography, etc)	4,062	3,466
Venue Hire	1,492	1,653
IT, Website, etc	924	787
Publicity, Marketing, Printing, etc	4,468	3,810
Other Travel	1,760	1,919
Catering, etc	1,440	603
Admin Team Fees (incl. Artistic Director fee)	19,997	12,425
General Admin	836	1,447
TOTAL PAYMENTS	63,105	57,443
Surplus for Year	4,846	2,743
Cash Funds at Year End	13,668	8,822

NOTES

1. The Income & Expenditure Statement is prepared on a Receipts and Payments basis.
2. All figures rounded to the nearest £.
3. Receipts are in unrestricted funds, except a total of £15,300 of the Grant funding, which was to be applied for specific purposes, mainly for the Composer-in-Residence and the Learning & Engagement programme. All those funds were fully applied for the specified purposes.

Balance Sheet at 31st December 2025

	31.12.25	31.12.24
Cash Funds	13,668	8,822
Net Assets	13,668	8,822

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Whiddon Autumn Festival

I report on the accounts of the company for the period 1st January 2025 to 31st December 2025, which are set out above on page 8 and which are consistent with the Charities Act 2011 and the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner:

The Trustees 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.

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

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act), and
- to 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 matter has come to my attention:

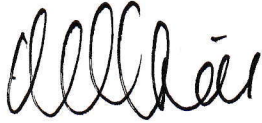
- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act and comply 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.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alexander Elkies', written in a cursive style.

Alexander Elkies
Little Berrydown
Gidleigh
Newton Abbot
Devon TQ13 8HS

Date: 6 May 2026