



Market Harborough Story Centre
Registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation
No. 1198936

Annual Report and Accounts
Year Ended 31st March 2025

Market Harborough Story Centre Trustee Report Year ended: 31st March 2025

Trustees:

Sarah Smyth (Chair) (Deceased August 2024)

Eleanor Shepherd

Kate Chapman (Resigned 20th October 2025)

Claire Bower (Chair)

Ron Counte (Appointed 3rd October 2025)

Christine Herrick (Resigned 3rd October 2025)

Market Harborough Story Centre (MHSC) was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) on 12th May 2022.

Objects: The promotion for the public benefit of the art of storytelling by the provision of opportunities for public education and participation.

Activities 1st April 2024 to 31 March 2025

The main focus of the charity in the year ending 31 March 2025 was to attempt to secure a permanent base of operations for the charity and a local community arts centre.

A number of sites had been looked into. MHSC worked with the Little Bowden local community group regarding a proposed new building on the Overstone Park development, but this was not ideal due to being some way from the Town centre at the top of Kettering Road.

Other sites including those in Coventry Road and Granville Street were looked at but focus switched to the Community Centre in Roman Way when it became known that the owners Leicestershire County Council (LCC) had decided to sell it.

Roman way is a centrally located 18,500 sq. ft. facility with a small number of existing tenants but with the majority of its 27 different areas unoccupied. It was considered by MHSC to be a perfect site for a Community Art Hub and could accommodate performance areas, meeting room, lecture and teaching rooms, gallery space, and income generating café facilities. It could also potentially house a cinema.

MHSC set up a sub group called Arthouse 36 and a detailed business case was drawn up for presentation to LCC with a view to requesting a Community Asset Transfer of the site. Sarah Smyth and Ron Counte appeared on HFM promoting the idea and meetings were held between Arthouse 36, LCC and The local MP to pursue the matter.

LCC decided against a community asset transfer but MHSC were able to persuade Harborough District Council to reclassify the building as a Community Asset of Value on 6th August 2024. This change of status would have to be taken into account by planning committee on any proposal regarding the site in the coming five years. It also created a six month moratorium period during which LCC could not sell the site, and also gave the community the right to submit a bid. LCC valued the site at up to £2 million.

MHSC then pursued potential sources of funding to submit a bid. Meetings were held with The Market Harborough and Bowden's Charity (MHBC) who undertook a feasibility study and held consultations with a variety of local creative and charitable groups. As a result of these consultations they determined that there was sufficient demand from local groups to merit a bid for the building. This was done in October 2024 but LCC accepted another offer. the site will now become a school for children with special educational need.

Despite the disappointment of failing to secure the site after a tremendous amount of time and effort on the project, MHSC felt that there were positives to be drawn from the project, namely that MHBC are persuaded on the benefit of funding a local Community facility, and that they are willing to invest significant six figure sums to secure such a site. Accordingly MHSC will continue to pursue options for such a facility.

The Roman Way project took up most of the MHSC attention during the year. However a number of creative activities were also undertaken. The Film Producing division (HFP) filmed two new short original dramas, the first of which was made available online in September 2024. HFP were admitted to the Film and Video Institute in April, and were featured in the August edition of the national Film and Video Makers magazine in August promoting story telling at the heart of the process. A fourth film was in post-production in February 2025 and rehearsals were underway for a fifth film in March.

The ChairArt division held two highly successful exhibitions, one in April and one in June attracting an increasing number of participants. More than 50 artists contributed to the June exhibition and Chair Art now has a permanent display in the Market Hall.

On the fundraising front Contributions totalling £150 the sale of programs at Parsnips Theatre groups activities were received in January and February. Ron Counte presented a seminar on recorded sound to the Harborough Culture Café in March generating £50 in speaking fees. The success of this event lead to opportunities to partner with the Culture Café on future events to secure additional funding for the charity.



What Next – Planned Activities for 2025-2026

Sadly MHSC fonder and Chairperson Sarah Smyth passed away suddenly in August 2024. Her inestimable contribution to the charity cannot be overstated.

As Sarah was the point of contact for the charity's banking, e-mail, web site, and general administration there was a substantial amount of work to be undertaken to restore these facilities and bring them back under control of the remaining Trustees. This has been achieved.

Due to pressing family commitments Christine Herrick also had to step back from day to day involvement with the Charity in January. Her absence was also keenly felt. Christine and Kate Lawson both subsequently resigned as Trustees in October 2025.

The remaining volunteers and Trustees have had to reorganise. Ron Counte, a Chartered Accountant, was appointed Treasurer and took over responsibility for finance and preparing the accounts. He was appointed a Trustee in October 2025.

It became clear that new volunteers were required to carry the work of the charity forward effectively. To this end the immediate focus for the coming years would be raising awareness of the charity and recruitment of new volunteers.

Multi award winning filmmaker Daniel Thomas and local author Diana Bretherick came forward to offer themselves as new Trustees and their skills and experience will be of substantial benefit to the Charity going forward.

In the months following the year end MHSC presented at the VE Day celebrations and later has run a series of highly successful creative events at The Harborough Culture Café significantly raising its profile and generating funds. MHSC is now a very well regarded member of the Creative Harborough movement and took part in several events in the Autumn Arts Festival. A date for a Harborough Film Festival featuring HFP and local film makers Infinitra films has been secured for January 2026 at the iconic Harborough Theatre.

The Harborough Writers Hub run by Diana Bretherick is now under the overall MHSC umbrella, and many of its members now participate in MHSC run events. Accordingly the talent pool available to the Charity for all forms of story-telling including poetry, stories, songs, plays, and film is extensive and expanding all the time. A Writers day event was held in September generating more funds.

The future of the charity now looks very promising. The search for a permanent site will continue.



Market Harborough Story Centre		1198936		CC17a
Annual accounts for the period				
Period start date	01/04/2024	To	Period end date 31/03/2025	

Section A Statement of financial activities

Recommended categories by activity	Details of own analysis	Note	Restricted		Endowment funds	Total this year	Total last year
			Unrestricted funds	income funds			
			£	£	£	£	£
			F01	F02	F03	F04	F05
Incoming resources (Note 3)							
Incoming resources from generated funds			-	-	-	-	-
Voluntary income		S01	698	-	-	698	1,016
Activities for generating funds		S02	225	-	-	225	700
Investment income		S03	-	-	-	-	-
Incoming resources from charitable activities		S04	-	-	-	-	-
Other incoming resources		S05	-	-	-	-	-
Total incoming resources		S06	923	-	-	923	1,716
Resources expended (Notes 4-8)							
Costs of Generating Funds			-	-	-	-	-
Costs of generating voluntary income		S07	588	-	-	588	1,898
Fundraising trading costs		S08	-	-	-	-	-
Investment management costs		S09	-	-	-	-	-
Charitable activities		S10	-	-	-	-	-
Governance costs		S11	-	-	-	-	-
Other resources expended		S12	-	-	-	-	-
Total resources expended		S13	588	-	-	588	1,898
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		S14	335	-	-	335	182
Gross transfers between funds		S15	-	-	-	-	-
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before other recognised gains/(losses)		S16	335	-	-	335	182
Other recognised gains/(losses)							
Gains and losses on revaluation of fixed assets for the charity's own use		S17	-	-	-	-	-
Gains and losses on investment assets		S18	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		S19	335	-	-	335	182
Total funds brought forward		S20	329	-	-	329	511
Total funds carried forward		S21	664	-	-	664	329

Section B

Balance sheet

		Note	Unrestricted funds £ F01	Restricted income funds £ F02	Endowment funds £ F03	Total this year £ F04	Total last year £ F05
Fixed assets							
Tangible assets (Note 9)	B01		-	-	-	-	-
	B02		-	-	-	-	-
Investments (Note 10)	B03		-	-	-	-	-
Total fixed assets	B04		-	-	-	-	-
Current assets							
Stock and work in progress	B05		-	-	-	-	-
Debtors (Note 11)	B06		-	-	-	-	-
(Short term) investments	B07		-	-	-	-	-
Cash at bank and in hand	B08		664	-	-	664	329
Total current assets	B09		664	-	-	664	329
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year (Note 12)	B10		-	-	-	-	-
Net current assets/(liabilities)	B11		664	-	-	664	329
Total assets less current liabilities	B12		664	-	-	664	329
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year (Note 12)	B13		-	-	-	-	465
Provisions for liabilities and charges	B14		-	-	-	-	-
Net assets	B15		664	-	-	664	136
Funds of the Charity							
Unrestricted funds	B16		664			329	329
	B17		-			-	-
Restricted income funds (Note 13)	B18			-		-	-
Endowment funds (Note 13)	B19				-	-	-
Total funds	B20		664	-	-	329	329
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees			Signature	Print Name	Date of approval		
				A. COUNTÉ	10/11/25		

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Cells highlighted in Blue contain formulas in protected cells. The protection can be removed from the tools menu

Note 3**Analysis of incoming resources***Incoming resources may be further analysed if this would help the reader of the accounts.*

	Analysis	This year £	Last year £
Voluntary income	Donation In Memorium	398	1,000
	Donation other	300	16
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
	Total	698	1,016
Activities for generating funds	Creative writing workshop	175	700
	Culture Café Presentation	50	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
	Total	225	700
Investment income		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
	Total	-	-
Incoming resources from charitable activities		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
	Total	-	-

Section C	Notes to the accounts	(cont)
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Note 4 Analysis of resources expended

Resources expended may be further analysed if this would help the reader of the accounts.

	Analysis	This year £	Last year £
Costs of generating voluntary income	Costs of operating charity	-	1,898
	Website	370	-
	Twinkl Renewal	54	-
	Insurance	86	-
	Room Hire	78	-
	Total	588	1,898
Fundraising trading costs		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
	Total	-	-
Investment management costs		-	-
		-	-
	Total	-	-
Charitable activities		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
	Total	-	-
Governance costs		-	-
		-	-
	Total	-	-