

**Richmond MayFest
Trustees Report
Annual Return for the Period 6 April 2024 to 5 April 2025**

**Richmond MayFest
The Annual Return for the
Period 2024-2025**

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TRUSTEES REPORT

1) Reference and Administrative details

The name of the charity is: Richmond MayFest

Charity registration number is: 1201807

The address of the charity is: 32a Newbiggin, Richmond, North Yorkshire DL10 4DT

The charity is managed by a board of trustees. The trustees serving during the relevant period are:

Trustee name:	Role (if any) during the relevant period:	Dates of service:
Graham Berry	n/a	Whole period
Charles Grumbley	n/a	Whole period
Baroness Angela Harris	n/a	Whole period
Catriona Marcia McLuckie	Chair	Whole period
Judith Moorhouse	n/a	Whole period
Gillian Page	Treasurer	Whole period
Susanna Pell	n/a	Whole period
Clive World	n/a	Whole period

The trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission’s guidance on public benefit. They know what their charity’s purposes are and understand how each purpose is for the public benefit. Especial attention is given to guidance on public benefit and the charging of fees with an eye to maximizing inclusivity. The majority of provision is free of charge for people in the Area, having negotiated free entry to Richmond Castle for residents of the Area for the whole of the festival. Where events are charged, there are significant discounts for residents of the Area, with free admission for under 18s. Many events are free for everyone.

2) Objectives and Activities

The objectives of Richmond MayFest (“RMF”) are:

- to advance the education of the public in the area in and around Richmond (postcode areas DL9, DL10 and DL11, “the Area”) in the subject of traditional and historical music and dance;
- to promote performance arts for the benefit of the public in the Area by the establishment of an annual festival of traditional and historical music and dance and associated activities;
- to promote the advancements of the arts in the Area by the preservation of historical performance arts traditions.

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In a general sense, RMF has the broad aim of contributing to the quality of life in Richmond and its surrounding areas through the provision of an accessible high-quality programme of events delivered by the community and by professional performers.

The core activity of Richmond MayFest is the delivery of an annual festival of traditional and historical performance arts and associated activities including community outreach. Key to this core activity is cooperation and partnership with existing community groups in the planning and delivery of the festival and in the provision of events and activities. Volunteers are an essential part of delivering the objectives of Richmond MayFest, which is a volunteer-run charity. Volunteers serve on the board of trustees, deliver fundraising events and initiatives, provide event stewarding services, and both lead and assist in festival activities and performances.

The Trustees of Richmond MayFest take the following considerations into account when selecting performances.

Artistic merit: is the performance of artistic merit? is the performance technically proficient, and also imaginative and creative?

Communication: is the performer capable of informal communication with the public? This is very important given the informality of most MayFest performances and priority is given to artists experienced in informal interaction

Locality: priority is given to reasonably local performers, given the two above criteria are met. 'Reasonably local' is defined as roughly up to 40 miles from Richmond; beyond that performers from Yorkshire or the north-east of England will also be prioritized. RMF aims to showcase local talent as far as possible.

Affordability: In the case of all professional artists, all paid performances must be affordable within our strict budget while always taking into account the responsibility to pay artists fairly.

The main activity undertaken during the relevant period was the staging of the third Richmond MayFest (in 2024), followed by planning for the fourth Richmond MayFest (in 2025). A report on the 2025 MayFest is included in this return because by the date of completion the 2025 event had been fully evaluated.

3) Achievements and Performance

Richmond MayFest 2024

The third Richmond MayFest was held on Friday 3 May – Monday 6 May 2024. It was the second MayFest to be operated by the Board of Trustees, constituted in February 2023 but in informal consultation since November 2022.

a) Content

The 2023 RMF had a broad programme of a Music Day (Saturday), a Dance Day (Sunday) and a Storytelling Day (Monday).

Music

- In concert: Bisarr. An up-and-coming talented duo of Nicholas Konradsen and James Noble, performing folk, world and medieval sounds, supported by local singer Emaline Delapaix, taking place in St Agatha's Church in Easby. Preceded by a musical promenade from The Station to St Agatha's with music from Co. Durham based folk duo The Ran Tanners.
- In concert: Richmondshire Choral Society at St Mary's Parish Church.
- For the first time, a Friday night event to launch the weekend: a Retro Night featuring music from the 1950s and

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1960s, at Richmond Town Hall, with local dance band AB.

- Performances from pupils of Richmond School at The Station
- Mini Folk Fest at Richmond Town Hall on the Saturday featuring local performers
- Informal performances at Richmond Castle from Richmond-based Trouvere (medieval music), and Dante Ferrara (Elizabethan).
- Informal performances in Richmond Market Place from Durham-based The Ran Tanners (folk), Damian Clarke (folk).
- Musical street entertainment from violinist Sid Bowfin and Musical Ruth (comedy keyboard performer), Richmond Market Place
- Folk sessions and Sea Shanty workshops led by Richmond's Black Lion Folk Club and the Ran Tanners at local pubs
- Drumming circle led by Yorkshire-based Rhythm Calls at the Catholic Parish Hall
- Reunion concert of the North Riding Youth Orchestra at Richmond School

Dance

- Annual Morris Day of Dance organised by Richmond-on-Swale Morris Men on the Sunday in the Market Place, Richmond Castle, and other outdoor venues around the town
- Performances at Richmond Town Hall from local dance schools the Charlotte Jacqueline School of Dance and the Rhythm & Shoes Dance Academy
- Ceilidh at Richmond Town Hall with Yorkshire-based No Lazy Dancing Dance Band, featuring newly researched traditional Yorkshire tunes and dances
- Scottish Country Dancing display and have-a-go with the Richmond Branch of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, at Richmond Town Hall
- Clog dancing workshop with local side Richmond Castle Clog and Tarantella Workshop led by Rhythm Calls, at the Catholic Parish Hall
- Maypole dancing interactive sessions with Maypole Movers at Richmond Castle (and in local schools before the weekend)

Storytelling

- The newly-commissioned MayFest Mini-Panto performed by Richmond Amateur Dramatic Society at Richmond Castle
- Storytelling at Richmond Castle from Yorkshire-based Carmel Page and NE-based Jim Grant.
- Storytelling in the Market Place with The Silly History Boys

Other

- Family craft activities at Richmondshire Museum creating decorations for the MayFest Parade with local community arts CIC Open Door Art
- MayFest parade on Monday, attracting more than 500 participants and led by Co Durham-based Newton Aycliffe Pipe Band
- MayFest MayFair at Richmond Castle – this new format included medieval reenactment, circus skills sessions, Maypole dancing and other children's activities as well as the daily programme of music, dance and drama. This was very successful, breaking all records of attendance for Richmond Castle
- MayFest Women Aloud. This was a new initiative undertaken in collaboration with Richmond Refugee Support Group. Women from local refugee communities joined with other local women to enjoy an afternoon of shared food and music. This was exceptionally well-attended, with a large contingent from the local Syrian community

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b) Public Benefit and Fees

In accordance with the RMF policy on public benefit and fees: (1) all events in the Market Place, Richmond Methodists, The Station and the Town Hall were free to all (2) all events at Richmond Castle were free to all residents of the Area; (3) workshops at Richmondshire Museum were free for residents of the Area; (4) the ticketed events were all discounted for residents of the Area; and (5) under 18s had free admission to all ticketed events.

The Bisarr concert saw over 50% Area attendance, and the Richmondshire Choral Society concert over 80% Area attendance. The Ceilidh saw around 65% local attendance. The Retro Night saw over 70% local attendance.

c) Audience Experience

Feedback in 2023 had highlighted a desire for more specifically child-friendly content and this was the most significant factor in planning for the 2024 event. With the engaged support of English Heritage staff at Richmond Castle, a MayFest MayFair was planned for the Castle featuring medieval reenactment, circus skills, face painting and stalls as well as the core music, dance and storytelling offering. This was extremely successful: Richmond Castle broke attendance records on each successive day of the event and ended up the second-busiest English Heritage site in the country over the Bank Holiday weekend. The May Fair was free to residents of the Area and over 50% of attendance was from the Area. Feedback was uniformly positive.

2024 also saw an outreach programme and more focused arts activities over the weekend of the festival. Four school Maypole workshops, plus three school arts workshops delivered by local arts CIC Open Door Art and linked to a MayFest Parade aimed (successfully) at increasing family and child participation over the weekend. The Parade involved well over 500 people. The weekend craft activities, again led by CIC Open Door Art in conjunction with MayFest volunteers, saw capacity attendance; these were free for families from the Area, in conjunction with Richmondshire Museum.

The other major outcome moving from 2023 to 2024 was to work even more closely with local community groups. The Black Lion Folk Club became more involved in planning the folk music offer, resulting in a free Mini Folk Fest at the Town Hall with a lineup curated by the Folk Club. Richmond on Swale Morris Men again organised the Day of Dance.

Numbers participating can be hard to quantify with so much free access, but a good guide is the counted entry into Richmond Castle, which broke attendance records on each successive day with around 5000 attendance in total. Both music concerts, the Ceilidh and the Retro Night were well attended, with the Ceilidh selling out.

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2025 largely focused on repeating the successes of 2024. Although outside the time range of this return, it is possible to report on the 2025 event.

- By popular demand the May Fair at the Castle returned and attendance at the Castle again exceeded previous records. The MayFair Parade again attracted hundreds of participants and was led by the May Queen and May King and their attendants, recruited from local schools. There was a new performance tent in the Castle to provide a focal point for performances.

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Music

- The headline concert was local medieval music specialists Trouvere with their new music and storytelling concert of the Ludus Danielis, a church play from the twelfth century. St Agatha's in Easby was the perfect setting for this medieval performances, which again saw over 100 people in attendance. Area attendance was over 50% and there was increased attendance by under 18s (free).
- The Richmondshire Choral Society combined a day of workshops with an evening 'scratch' performance of The Messiah
- The MayFest Mini Folk Fest at the Town Hall, organized by the Black Lion Folk Club and again featuring local performers, was exceptionally well attended on Saturday afternoon, as were the several folk sessions and workshops
- Wandering music throughout the weekend from Durham-based The Ran Tanners, including a well-attended musical promenade to Easby before the Trouvere concert
- Buskers Saturday was a major innovation in 2025. Supported by private donations this saw nine separate busking acts from Yorkshire and the North East performing in 5 locations around the town centre on the Saturday. This broadened the musical range of MayFest
- A Sunday Organ Recital at St Mary's Parish Church was another addition to the programme that proved extremely popular, with over 80% attendance from the Area
- Drumming workshops were held at the Catholic Church Hall, led by Yorkshire-based Rhythm Calls.
- There was increased community choral participation with the local Musicality choir performing at the Town Hall and Yorkshire Voices at the Castle.
- Northallerton Wind Ensemble played at the Castle
- Another new element was a Playing Day by the North East Early Music Forum on the Monday, at the Town Hall. They had been forced to move from their previous home at the Bowes Museum and were delighted to find a new home at MayFest, especially as they attracted significantly larger audiences!

Dance

- MayFest Day of Dance organized by Richmond on Swale Morris Men, featuring morris sides from Yorkshire and the north east
- Maypole dancing (interactive have-a-go) at the May Fair, led by Maypole Movers (plus school workshops during the week before the festival)
- Appalachian Clog from Harrogate-based Cricket on the Hearth and Northern Clog from Richmond Castle Clog
- Clog dancing and Italian folk dance workshops
- Historical dancing as part of the NEEMF Playing Day
- Sell-out ceilidh at Richmond School with Blind Panic Ceilidh Band

Storytelling

- "Dr Reynard" masked medieval comedy panto written and directed by Richmond-based (and RMF trustee) Gill Page performed by Richmond Amateur Dramatic Society at Richmond Castle
- Storytelling at Richmond Castle from Clare Goodall
- Storytelling in the Market Place with The Silly History Boys
- Spoken word performances from local writers' group Word Weavers of Richmond

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Other

- New May Queen and May King selection and participation, an initiative that extended to participation in the Richmond Meet, a major community event at the end of Maay
- Family craft activities at Richmondshire Museum creating banners and flags for the MayFest Parade. Again, there were similar workshops in local schools in the week before the festival
- MayFest parade on Monday, attracting more than 500 participants and led by NE-based Tyne Tees Electrical Engineers Pipe Band
- MayFest Women Aloud returned, again in collaboration with Richmond Refugee Support, and was again very well attended. There was drumming with Rhythm Calls and hilarious balloon modelling with Clare Goodall. There was strong attendance in particular from both Syrian and Afghan communities
- Drum and movement session with Rhythm Calls at Richmond's Dementia Forward Community Café on the Friday before the festival

In summary, over the course of 2024 and into 2025, RMF has established itself as a major cultural event in the Richmond calendar. It nurtures local community performance activity and provides a high-focus platform for groups to showcase what they do, and to attract new members. Hundreds of local people are involved in delivering performance over the course of MayFest. RMF also provides an artistically high-quality, accessible and fun event to the people of Richmond and the broader Area. Further, RMF engages proactively with local businesses, individuals and venues to achieve this.

4) Structure, Governance and Management

Richmond MayFest's governing document is its Constitution, which was adopted 2 February 2023, and last amended on 9th May 2023. Richmond MayFest is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

Trustees are recruited as required from the local community.

This Annual Report was approved by all the Trustees on 21 January 2026.

5) Financial review

The charity held cash funds at the year end (5th April 2025) totalling £12456. However, much of this sum represents funds raised to finance the 2025 Festival as required for the forthcoming year. The financial year end is not perfectly suited to our operations in that it ends when we typically have almost all receipts in for that year's festival, and the bulk of the expenditure comes in May.

The end result is a somewhat skewed picture of our finances. In effect, the charity is operating with minimal reserves of less than 10%, and the establishment of a reserve remains a key aim of the trustees over the coming five years, to increase the resilience of the charity. The charity has adopted a Reserves Policy with the aim of increasing reserves by around 10% a year to attain reserves of 45-50% which would protect the charity in the case of a crisis in the funding of the festival.

Signed for the board of trustees of Richmond MayFest.

Graham Berry
(Current Chair)

Print: G. BERRY
Date: 21/1/26

Gill Page
(Trustee and Festival Director)

Print: G. P. PAGE
Date: 21/1/26



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Richmond MayFest Receipts and Payments Account: April 6th 2024 to April 5th 2025

These accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis. The income and expenditure show therefore reflect the cash/bank receipts and payments during the period.

**Section A
Receipts and payments**

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total funds
Receipts			
Grants from public bodies	500		500
Donations and gifts	1650	3750	5400
Grants provided by other charities	0	500	500
Membership subscriptions	960	0	960
Sponsorships	2400	2750	5150
Ticket receipts	1595	0	1595
Fundraising events	5909	0	5909
Event income besides ticket sales (advertising, stall fees)	2440	0	2440
Other	0		
Total receipts	15454	7000	22454

Payments

Artists' fees	7310	3207	10517
Venue costs	803	298	1101
Equipment for event	1623	971	2594
Insurance	531	-	531
Technical and admin support	850	-	850
Box office and website costs	302	-	302
Advertising in print media	1381	-	1381
Online media advertising	35	-	35
Printed promotional material	511		511
Postage and office costs	94	-	94
Photography	300	-	300
Staging fundraising events	500	-	500
Volunteer expenses	679	1000	1679
Other	144		144
Total payments	15063	5476	20539

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Net of receipts/(payments)	391	1524	1915
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	6036	4505	10541
Cash funds this year end	6427	6029	£12,456.00

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

		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £
Cash funds	Funds raised & not yet spent for MayFest 2025 plus reserves	6427	6029
	Total cash funds	6427	6029

Graham Berry
(Current Chair)

GBerry
Print: *Graham BERRY*
Date: *21/1/26*

Gill Page
(Trustee and Festival Director)

Print: *G. P. PAGE*
Date: *21/1/26*

[Signature]