

TRUSTESS ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

FOR THE PERIOD: 8 July 2024 – 7 July 2025

WILLIAM BLAKE FELLOWSHIP

Registered Charity Number 1204221

PRINCIPAL ADDRESS:

35 Chalcot Square, London NW1 8YP

CONTENTS:	PAGE
Chair Statement, Financial Review	2
Reference and Administrative Information	2
Summary of Main Objectives of Charity	3
Main Activities Undertaken	3
Blake's Resting Place, Bunhill Fields/ Golden String Walks	4
House of William Blake	5
Partnerships and Networking	6
Community/Public Engagement and Outreach	
Financial Review	
Plans for the Coming Year	

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

CHARITY TRUSTEES:

CATHERINE KELLY (Chair) 18 August 2023
 SIMON CLARKE (Secretary) 18 August 2023
 DR. JOSEPHINE MCQUAIL. 14 March 2024
 DR. MARK RILEY 25 November 2024

CHAIR STATEMENT

Welcome to our Annual Report

This year has been one of steady progress for the Fellowship. As trustees, our main job is to make sure we are doing what we set out to do—supporting our community effectively while staying on a firm legal and financial footing.

Running a charity responsibly means constantly checking that our "house is in order." To do this, we continue to rely on advice and resources from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), Voluntary Action Islington (VAI), and the Charity Commission. As we move into our third year of operation This guidance provides a vital framework that helps us to strengthen our governance and to add to and keep our policies up to date, ensuring we aim for the best possible service for those we support.

We extend our sincere thanks to all our supporters, notably Tracy March, for her invaluable contribution to the House of William Blake project.

Our compact Board of four trustees has achieved a great deal over the past year, proving that a small group can deliver significant results when guided by care, integrity, and a shared vision and a strong desire to make a difference.

Financial Review & Governance.

Stable Financial Position: The Fellowship has maintained a stable financial position this year, ensuring the continued delivery of our core activities. A full breakdown of income and expenditure is provided in the financial statements following this report.

Income and Donations: Our total income reached £4861.44 primarily driven by generous donations in appreciation of our "Blake Walks" and general support for the Fellowship's charitable mission.

Operational Expenditure: Total expenditure for the period was £2494, reflecting careful management of our resources.

Restricted Funds & Strategic Impact: Restricted donations were specifically utilised to fund a successful Pre-Application submission to Westminster City Council. This critical milestone confirmed the feasibility of converting 17 South Molton Street into a visitor centre, providing a robust foundation for the House of William Blake project.

Catherine Kelly (Chair) William Blake Fellowship

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES – SUMMARY OF THE OBJECTS OF THE CHARITY AND GOVERNING DOCUMENT

TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC WORLDWIDE IN ALL ASPECTS OF THE LIFE AND WORKS, MISSION AND VISION OF WILLIAM BLAKE, HIS INFLUENCE AND ASSOCIATIONS WITH OTHER ARTISTS PAST PRESENT AND FUTURE THROUGH WALKS, TALKS AND EVENTS AND PUBLIC PERFORMANCES; (2) TO MAINTAIN, PRESERVE AND ENHANCE, AS MEMORIALS, THE RESTING PLACES OF WILLIAM AND CATHERINE BLAKE AND FAMILY AT BUNHILL FIELDS CEMETERY; (3) SUPPORT AND PROMOTE IN SUCH WAYS AS THE TRUSTEES THINK FIT ALL PROPERTY AND CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL PLACES OF INTEREST RELATING TO BLAKE; (4) TO BE AN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE AND TO SUPPORT THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM IN RELATION TO BLAKE STUDY AND RESEARCH.

HOW THE CHARITY IS CONSTITUTED:

CIO FOUNDATION - A Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

Consideration of Risks

RISK ASSESSEMENT for Bunhill Field Cemetery

RISK ASSESSMENT for Blake Golden String Walks

Public Liability

PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE Ref: ACY 2430485

Public and Products Liability indemnity limit. £5,000,000

Related Parties

We work in collaboration with and support the work of other William Blake groups, charities and associations as well as societies related to Blake's life and times and work.

SUMMARY OF MAIN ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT IN RELATION TO THESE OBJECTS

The objects of the Fellowship, as set out in its governing document, are to advance the education of the public in the life and works of William Blake (1757–1827).

In July 2025, the Trustees formally amended the Fellowship's constitution to more precisely define these core aims:

- **Global Education:** Promoting worldwide awareness of Blake's life, creative works, and enduring cultural influence through curated events and performances.

- **Heritage Preservation:** Ensuring the preservation and dignified maintenance of the resting places of William and Catherine Blake at Bunhill Fields.
- **Site Advocacy:** Campaigning for the protection and promotion of historical sites associated with Blake's biography.
- **Educational Resource:** Serving as a resource for researchers and supporting the integration of Blake's work within the National Curriculum.

Public Benefit

The Trustees have referred to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when planning and reviewing our activities. The Fellowship ensures that all initiatives—from guided walks to site maintenance—remain free or donation only to ensure broad public accessibility.

Achievements and Performance

The 2024–2025 period saw significant growth in public outreach, heritage stewardship, and strategic advocacy.

Heritage and Memorial Maintenance (Bunhill Fields)

Our stewardship of the Blakes' resting places remains a central pillar of our charitable activity:

- **Stewardship:** Since early 2024, we have conducted maintenance sessions every six weeks to care for William Blake's ledger stone. This has strengthened our operational partnership with the *Friends of City Gardeners* and the *City of London City Gardens* department.
- **Community Engagement:** Our series of public engagement Open Days at Bunhill (13 October 2024, 23 March and the National Gardens Open Day 8 June 2025) empowered visitors to explore William Blake's enduring legacy. By providing tailored educational materials and talks, we helped bridge the gap between contemporary audiences and the site's rich 18th-century history.
- **Regular Events at Bunhill** – We create regular opportunity for aficionados and those new to the works of William Blake to gather at his resting place. We lay flowers and do readings for the anniversaries of Blake and Catherine's interment at Bunhill, 18th August and 23rd October and Catherine's birthday on 25th April and Blake's birthday on 28 November. We are grateful for the support of City of London Corporation, City

Gardens especially Sharon Hollington and Dan Rosenberg who facilitate these gatherings and the Friends of City Gardens Susanna Cohen and Louise Choo.

Outreach and Academic Engagement

- **Academic Recognition:** We are pleased to report that Trustee Dr McQuail was appointed to the advisory board of *Blake: An Illustrated Quarterly*, the world's pre-eminent journal for Blake studies. This appointment further strengthens the Fellowship's links to global scholarship.

The "Golden String Walks" Programme

This new public engagement initiative was successfully piloted to connect Blake's mythology with London's physical geography:

- **Inaugural Birthday Walk (Nov 2024):** A guided route from South Molton Street through Soho, Blake's place of birth, establishing cultural links between Blake and later figures like Jimi Hendrix, supported by engagement with the *Handel/Hendrix Museum*.
- **Expansion (2025):** Targeted walks, 'Blake and Primrose Hill' (in association with the *Primrose Hill Residents Association*) explored Blake's links to the local area, (his vision on Primrose Hill), WB Yeats and George Bernard Shaw.
- **Youth Outreach:** A new walk, "Blake – The Chartered Streets" (July 2025) successfully attracted a younger more diverse demographic, fulfilling our aim to engage new audiences with London's literary history still relevant to today.

Advocacy for the 'House of William Blake' cultural and learning centre

The Fellowship continued its collaboration with Tracy Marsh, Managing Director of HUSH Project Management & Consulting Ltd, to liaise with Grosvenor Property UK to establish a permanent William Blake Centre at 17 South Molton Street, (his last surviving London home), to celebrate his enduring work, life and cultural legacy.

- **Political Engagement:** Secured official support from the Greater London Assembly, (GLA) in February 2025 and the Mayor of London, Sir Sadiq Khan for cultural centre, dedicated to William Blake, to be established at 17 South Molton Street. Our thanks to Labour London Assembly Members, Marina Ahmad and Elly Barker for proposing and seconding and Councillors Anna Burrage and Matt Cooper for support and guidance. Following these endorsements, the GLA Press Office generated positive media reports for the campaign.

- **Stakeholders Strategic Liaison:** Throughout the year, we maintained a productive dialogue with Grosvenor Property UK's Director of South Molton Triangle development to explore use of no 17 as an international cultural centre and ensure long-term viability. We presented a comprehensive proposal for a landmark partnership involving Grosvenor, Westminster Council, English Heritage, NWEA, and the Mayor of London. Central to this vision is the creation of a dedicated charitable entity to develop and manage the venture.
Our work was further informed by valuable consultations with the National Lottery Heritage Fund and specialist Construction, Architects and Heritage Consultants. We also continued to strengthen our community ties, fostering positive relationships with the Mayfair Neighbourhood Forum and the Residents Society of Mayfair and St James's. Our thanks go to Dan Cruickshank OBE, Simon Tarrant, and Rachel Blake MP for their continued advocacy. Their contributions have been highly valued as we work toward this vision.
- **Sector Support:** Collated formal evidence of support of the Blake house proposal from world-class institutions including *The Tate*, *British Library*, *English Heritage*, and the *Royal Academy of Music* and many significant individuals.
- **Project Viability and Planning:** To determine the viability of establishing the 'House of William Blake,' the Fellowship commissioned Clague Architects, Master planners & Heritage Consultants, to prepare a formal pre-application planning submission. This document was submitted to Westminster City Council to resolve the potential for 'change of use' for the site, ensuring the project aligns with statutory heritage conservation requirements

Partnerships and Networking

The Fellowship thrives on collaborative action:

- **International Reach:** Dr Josephine McQuail represented the Fellowship to academic and cultural communities in the US and Europe, raising our international profile.
- **Voluntary Sector:** In December 2024 we joined 'The Big Alliance' network, allowing the charity to benefit from pro-bono corporate consultancy and CSR expertise such as Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, Inc. We continued to liaise with our sister Blake groups attending and supporting their events.
- **Strategic Heritage Partnerships:** We initiated a dialogue with The Savoy (Fairmont) Group to explore a commemorative project for the 2027 anniversary, engaging with them as the current stewards of the site where William Blake took his final breath.
- **Best practice:** We established knowledge-sharing links with the *Rembrandt House Museum* (Amsterdam) Charles Dickens Museum, to refine our approach to historic house management and heritage advocacy. We continue to use NCVO, National Council for Voluntary Organisations and VAI, Voluntary Action Islington and the

Government's Charity Commission site as resources for best practice. This keeps the Fellowship compliant with sector changes and ensures we are managed as effectively as possible.

Structure, Governance, and Management

- **Governing Document:** The charity is a CIO Foundation governed by its constitution dated 4 August 2023
- **Trustee Recruitment:** The Board was strengthened by the appointment of Dr. Mark Riley (Founder of Thinking Place) as a Trustee. Dr. Riley will take the lead on our 2027 Fountain Court project, leveraging his expert modelling skills and deep knowledge of educational history and the Blakes' Fountain Court residence.
Dr. Mark Riley contributed two 3-dimensional works and a sketchbook to Swedenborg's *Lusthus: In the Garden* exhibition (11 July 2024 -20 December 2024) at Swedenborg House, London WC1A 2TH. This was a second exhibition organised in conjunction with the publication of Swedenborg's *Lusthus*, a full colour book—described by Tom Taylor in the Cambridge Review of Books as 'a poignant reflection upon the interconnectedness of place and writing, realism and idealism, universalism and particularism.' Dr. Riley also had a photograph reproduced in the publication.
- **Risk Management:** To ensure the safety of all public walks and activities at Bunhill Fields, a comprehensive risk assessment was completed in September 2024. Furthermore, full Public Liability Insurance has been secured and remains up to date
- **Financial Review:** In November 2024, the Fellowship successfully met its fundraising targets to facilitate the planning application process for William Blake House via the Westminster Council portal.

Future planning

- With the charity more established this year and in addition to the ongoing projects to promote the life and works of William Blake we were able to progress with the plans to create a series of Blake Walks around the City. For the upcoming year we aim to widen our research into other Blake related locations.
- We continue to review our Board's skills range to identify gaps and will actively seek new Trustees whose specialist skills align with our evolving strategic priorities, especially in finance (Treasurer) and social media/Marketing.
- We continue to collaborate with Mayfair Library on raising awareness of William Blake in the area and on a series of 'Blakemas' events using the library facilities in the autumn/winter of 2025.
- We aim to run a trialed walk with trustee Dr Mark Riley from the site of Fountain Court to Bunhill Fields to be scheduled to commemorate Blake's internment at Bunhill on 17 August 1827
- We will continue to grow our connection and build relationships within London and the UK, e.g., Swedenborg and Handel House and the Shaw Society and with

individuals and groups interested in Blake and promote Blake in other countries around the world.

- In the March of 2025, Dr. Riley was commissioned to submit a work for the Elective Affinities exhibition (also at Swedenborg House). This exhibition will run from 18 September 2025 – 27 February 2026.

As we continue our preparations and projects for the 2027 bicentenary of William Blake's passing, the Fellowship remains committed in our mission to secure a lasting legacy for his life and works. We are particularly focused on the preservation of 17 South Molton Street—Blake's only surviving London home and the site where he produced his most renowned works, including the illuminated masterpiece *Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion*.

While we are a small team, the significant milestones achieved this year—from critical planning successes to international academic appointments—demonstrate our efficiency and resolve. We enter the coming year with renewed purpose, committed to transparency, stewardship, and the preservation of Blake's visionary spirit for future generations.

Declaration - Date: 5 May 2026

The Trustees hereby declare that we have approved the Trustees' Report above.

William Blake Fellowship Trustees:

CATHERINE KELLY (Chair)

SIMON CLARKE (Secretary)

DR. JOSEPHINE MCQUAIL.

DR. MARK RILEY

WILLIAM BLAKE FELLOWSHIP:

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

FOR THE PERIOD: 8 JULY 2024– 7 JULY 2025

<https://www.williamblakefellowship.com>

EMAIL: Williamblakefellowship@mail.com

FINANCIAL STATEMENT - FOR THE PERIOD: 8 JULY 2024– 7 JULY 2025

Accounts William Blake Fellowship 2024- 2025 (A Charitable Incorporated Organisation, CIO)

	2025	2025	2024	2024	
	Restricted	Unrestricted	Restricted	Unrestricted	
Income:					
Donations and Legacies	66.01	170	4250	232	
Charitable Activities		59.43		87	Blake walks
				0	
Other trading activities					
Investments					
Total Income	66.01	229.43	4250	319	
Expenditure:					
Raising funds		132		156	Printing
Overheads		136		138	Insurance
Charitable Activities			1932		Pre-App Submission to Westminster Council
Total Expenditure		268	1932	294	
Total Reconciliation of Funds		-38.57	2318	55	
Funds Brought Forward	2318	55	0	75	
Total Net Movement of Funds	0	16.43	2318	25	
Funds Carried Forward					
Total Funds Carried Forward	2384.01	16.43	2318	100	

Total income and expenditure over the accounting period 2024-2025. NB funds carried forward from 2024 are from calendar years.

Income: £4861.44. Expenditure: £2494