

Charity Registration Number 1208883

Friends of Lancaster Library
Trustees Annual Report and
unaudited financial statements
for the year ended 30th June 2025

Friends of Lancaster Library

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Friends of Lancaster Library

Trustees' Report for the year ended 30th June 2025

The Trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 30th June 2025.

Friends of Lancaster Library Charitable Incorporated Organisation (hereafter referred to as "FOLL") exists to encourage and support use of Lancaster Central Library across all our many diverse local communities, through regular cafes held in the library, the organisation of regular talks on matters of local interest, craft workshops and a range of community outreach events.

This report and the accounts contained within it are for the first year of FOLL's operations. The charity has taken over the operations of a previous voluntary community organisation also called Friends of Lancaster Library that was formed in July 2014.

To enable readers of these accounts to better understand them we have provided some introductory information about the original voluntary community organisation, which during the year transferred all of its assets to the Friends of Lancaster Library CIO and then ceased all operations.

Background - the history of the Friends of Library voluntary community group

Over ten years ago Lancashire County Council Library Service were keen to set up Friends Groups as voluntary community groups to enable local people to promote and support their libraries. They provided a template Friends constitution and a number of Friends groups were set up including Friends of Lancaster Library. (hereafter referred to as "The Friends")

The Friends was originally formed in July 2014 as a voluntary community group. A committee was formed to manage this group of volunteers with an interest in promoting Lancaster Central Library.

Amongst other activities The Friends organised monthly talks on topics of local interest and publicised these locally in order to attract more people to come into the library so that they could discover for themselves that there was more to the library than just the borrowing of books.

One of the groups meeting weekly at the library was a Bounce and Rhyme group for parents of pre-school children. The Friends were encouraged to set up a weekly Pop-Up café in the heart of the ground floor of the library once a week to enable these parents and children to mix together socially after their activity.

A small team of volunteers ran the café, some bringing into the library cakes that they had baked at home while others served hot drinks for the adults and squash for the children. Others would set up and clear away the furniture for the café. Customers were invited to donate to the work of The Friends. Once the cost of catering supplies were covered this generated funds that The Friends could spend on items for the library that County Council funding could not cover. This would include the provision of Christmas Trees, a Santa suit, and small gifts for children as well as a range of other items requested by library staff that helped to improve the facilities of the library including, for example, a Flag Pennant indicating the location of the library in Market Square, 'A' Boards that publicised the range of activities and events taking place in the library, including the pop-up café itself.

The café was popular with a wide range of people from the local community. Stuart Reynolds, who had been one of the founder members of the Friends, became the Chair of The Friends in 2016.

Friends of Lancaster Library

Trustees' Report for the year ended 30th June 2025 (continued)

Then came COVID 19 and the Pop-Up café was forced to close. Sadly a number of the volunteers who had been running the café died during the COVID lockdown, while others were unable to continue volunteering. When the lockdown ended, The Friends Committee started to recruit volunteers again before they could reopen the Pop-Up Café. Initially things began slowly holding monthly cafes, and then as more volunteers came on board The Friends were able to operate the cafes fortnightly and eventually building up to it being a weekly event again.

The size of The Friends Committee was expanded spreading the workload and enabling members to focus on specific roles. Coordinating the Pop up Cafe, ensuring that there were enough volunteers to bake cakes and others to serve them, took up time. Rather than continuing to rely on volunteers to do everything a new vision for the future emerged.

The Friends Committee decided to apply for a grant from the National Lottery Community Fund to employ a part-time Café and Community Development Worker as a pilot project on a 12 month fixed term contract. This person would have the time to recruit and manage volunteer bakers and cafe servers as well as to plan activities and events within the library. They would also build relationships with other community groups in order to attract more people to use the library services.

A sub-committee was formed to apply for the grant. It was realised that if The Friends' lottery bid was successful we would need to register the organisation with the Charity Commission. So as soon as the bid had been submitted we applied to the Charity Commission to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with five committee members of The Friends voluntary community group agreeing to become Trustees in the new organisation.

In parallel with this a crowdfunding bid was made for a project to commission and install some wall mounted murals in the children's library that depicted some of Lancaster's local history. These funds were treated in the final set of accounts of The Friends as Restricted Funds.

The Community Fund approved our grant application of £19,990 which on receipt in May 2024 were also treated in the final set of accounts of The Friends as Restricted Funds.

The Charity Commission approved our application for charitable status on 28th June 2024.

Subsequently The Friends Committee met for the final time and resolved to transfer all of its assets to the newly formed Friends of Lancaster Library Charitable Incorporated Organisation and to cease operations.

The assets transferred from The Friends voluntary community group (The Friends) to the Friends of Lancaster Library Charitable Incorporated Organisation (FOLL) were as follows:

Unrestricted Funds	£ 2,155
Restricted Funds	
Community Fund Grant	£19,990
Crowdfunding for Murals	£ 1,435
Total Restricted Funds	£21,425
Total funds transferred	£23,580

Friends of Lancaster Library
Trustees' Report for the year ended 30th June 2025 (continued)

Friends of Lancaster Library
Trustees' Report for the year ended 30th June 2025

Report of the major events and activities of Friends of Lancaster Library Charitable Incorporated Organisation (FOLL) throughout the year.

The monthly FOLL talks held in the library have continued to be well supported with audiences of up to 40. Over 300 people attended the 12 talks between January and June 2025. Subjects covered have included, local history, talks by local authors as well as opportunities for local charities and community groups to talk about their work. Throughout the year we increased the number of talks from 12 to 18. Over the next year we plan to increase it to 20.

In July 2024 we celebrated the tenth Anniversary of the founding of the original voluntary community group Friends of Lancaster Library.

In September 2024 a Café and Community Development Worker was employed on a 12 month fixed term contract reporting to the FOLL Chair. The role included volunteer recruitment, management and mentoring of volunteers, oversight of the running of the café and to work with the library staff to agree additional pop-up café led events and fundraisers, including arts, culture, music and food. The worker also had a remit to reach out further to the local community, supporting the library services' goal for community engagement.

In January 2025 FOLL held a special event to publicise the installation of the Murals in the Children's Library. Representatives from Lancashire County Council Leisure & Cultural Services based at County Hall Preston attended the launch as well as Abi Mills, the Mayor of Lancaster.

Achievements

FOLL has increased its volunteers, attracted by micro volunteering opportunities, such as playing the piano during a café, staffing the café and baking cakes. We have also been keen to offer café volunteers opportunity to serve at special cafes to help further their development.

The Wednesday Pop-Up café is our most popular regular event and we have built on this popularity by introducing a Thursday Craft and Wellbeing café. Our volunteers enjoy sharing their craft skills at this café, which attracts multi-generational participants. The Thursday café also helps reduce food waste, as we can utilise left over baking from the previous day.

Following consultation with neuro-divergent café volunteers we now offer a monthly café drop in on a Wednesday afternoon for neuro-divergent café customers and their family and friends.

FOLL has utilised highly creative approaches to reach out to new audiences, such as offering event cafes during Light Up Lancaster over three evenings, where footfall to the library during the day and evening totalled 6,000. The Lancaster Fun Palace event had the highest number of visitors among all the participating Lancashire Libraries. FOLL held additional pop up cafes and workshops in the library at the following events: Lancaster Literature Festival, Poetry cafes, Christmas Workshops, Lancaster Pride, More Music Eco festival, a Lancaster Day event which featured period music. On Dinosaur Day FOLL held a pop up takeaway cake stall in Market Square outside the library entrance coupled with dinosaur-themed workshops.

Our impact

From written feedback and discussions with café volunteers, we have been able to see that volunteering with FOLL café helps create a safe environment for social confidence to flourish, providing regular meaningful activity within the library and an opportunity for volunteers to engage with the local community which can help reduce anxiety and improve wellbeing, building a strong sense of connection to an important community building and reinforcing a sense of belonging.

Friends of Lancaster Library

Trustees' Report for the year ended 30th June 2025 (continued)

We also been able to extend volunteer opportunities to volunteers from diverse backgrounds such as those who are neuro-divergent or those for whom English is a 2nd language.

Regular conversations with café customers and library users that engage with FOLL events and activities has highlighted the value of opportunities to connect, share, learn new skills and celebrate with a diverse community of all ages who use the library.

The success of FOLL Café is shown by the increase in donations received compared with what The Friends voluntary community group had generated in the previous year. This has enabled FOLL to purchase useful items for the library such as a STEM Lego set costing £410 to enhance learning opportunities at the library's STEM club and increased FOLL's ability to purchase additional resources for the library that would otherwise not have been purchased from Lancashire County Council funds.

FOLL Café also has acts as hub to connect with people and families who are more vulnerable. We have been able to signpost those seeking advice and help to other providers, such as the Lancaster Men's Hub, Citizens Advice Bureau and The Cornerstone. We have been told that having someone to be a listening ear and sounding board has been helpful and FOLL continues to engage with other local community groups and organisations to learn how they can benefit vulnerable members of the community.

Our new information stand has been a real success, helping us connect with library users and share information when the cafe is not open. We have introduced a FOLL newsletter to reach out to the library users and this has been really appreciated by those who don't use social media but still want to connect with FOLL and the library.

We have also boosted our presence on social media, particularly our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/follmembers>, where at the time of writing this report we have over 1,700 followers. We also send out newsletters and reminders about upcoming events to a mailing list of over 300. This all serves to increase the profile, and we trust visitors and users of Lancaster Central Library.

Plans for the future.

FOLL will be applying for additional funding for year two of our pilot project. In the next year FOLL plans to set up an evening games night for younger people, with under 16s accompanied by parents. This aligns with the library's aim to attract more young people into the library, by identifying key activities and projects in partnership that young people can identify with and will engage in. FOLL also plans to support environmentally friendly approaches to delivering crafts and arts related projects by using more recycled materials. We will identify more opportunities to improve wellbeing and reduce social isolation through the activities and events we offer through the FOLL cafe. We will continue to raise awareness of how much is on offer at the library and contact new community groups who can benefit from the facilities offered by Lancaster Central Library.

Thank yous.

Finally the Trustees would like to thank the following people.

Stuart Reynolds who was involved in our predecessor voluntary community group Friends of Lancaster Library from its inception in July 2014 and who became its chair in 2016 and stayed with us as a Trustee for the first 18 months of the new CIO.

Sharon Gibson our Cafe and Community Group Project Worker and all those who have volunteered for FOLL over the last year. Thank you also to Peter Fielding our Independent Examiner.

We thank the Library staff for their advice and assistance throughout the year as well as Lancaster and District Community Volunteer Solutions who have provided us with lots of invaluable advice and direction.

Friends of Lancaster Library
Trustees' Report for the year ended 30th June 2025 (continued)

Other information required by the Charity Commission.

Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	As stated in our constitution "To advance the education of the public in Lancaster and the surrounding area or communities by supporting the Lancaster lending Library operated and managed by Lancashire County Library Service. To promote for the benefit of the residents of Lancaster and the surrounding area or communities, the provision of a public library for recreation and or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances or for the public at large in the interests of social welfare and with the object of improving the condition of life of the said residents."
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	We hold a weekly 'Pop Up' Café within the library serving drinks and homemade cakes. We receive donations which are spent on holding special events, craft materials for workshops and the purchase of additional items for the library for the benefit of library users. We also hold regular talks, around 18 per year, on matters of interest to local people. We organise special events, craft and wellbeing activities and workshops. We generate publicity for events taking place at Lancaster Central Library on our Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/follmembers
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	The Trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit. All activities are free to attend, but we encourage those who can to donate towards the work of the charity.

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

SORP reference

Policy on grant making

Para 1.38

Not applicable

Policy on social investment
including program related
investment

Para 1.38

Not applicable

Contribution made by
volunteers

Para 1.38

Without volunteers FOLL could not function. The charity relies on its volunteers to bake cakes, to serve at the cafe and take part in and lead activities. The Trustees are all volunteers and serve in a range of roles.

Other

Achievements and Performance

SORP reference

Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.

Para 1.20

Provision of weekly Pop Up Cafe in Lancaster Central Library. This has been run on a "pay as you feel" donations only basis.

This has been of benefit to a range of different segments of the local population, e.g. the elderly, families with young children, some homeless people.

Involvement in Fun Palace events for families. Provision of talks on matters of local interest. Special one-off cafes with proceeds going to charity.

Organised and paid for special events and activities held at Lancaster Library

Items bought and donated to Lancaster Library.

Friends of Lancaster Library

Trustees' Report for the year ended 30th June 2025 (continued)

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	We have attracted more people into the library as a result of our promotional activity. Our presence in the library has encouraged more people to visit. We have bought items for the library and put on events and workshops.
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	Donations received show an increase on those received by our predecessor voluntary community group. We have increased the value of unrestricted funds held by the charity to enable us to do more in the coming year.
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	Not applicable
Other		

Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	Position year end 30/06/25 Receipts from funds transferred from FOLL Community Group. £23,580 Other Receipts £ 6,584 Total receipts £30,164 Payments £21,981 Net surplus £8,183
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	Reserves should cover 3 months operating costs of running the Pop-Up cafe in the library. Restricted Grants are kept separate so that they are only used for the specified purpose.
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	General Reserve assets £3,015 held in current and savings accounts with Virgin Money. This is equivalent to 6 months' operating expenses. Restricted Grants Reserve £5,168, to cover project worker's salary July-September 2025 etc. held in Virgin Money current account.
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	Does not apply
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	Does not apply

Friends of Lancaster Library

Trustees' Report for the year ended 30th June 2025 (continued)

Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	Does not apply
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	The majority of this first year's receipts came from the transfer of fund balances held by The Friends voluntary community group that closed during the year. The value of this transfer amounted to ££23,580 made up of Unrestricted Funds of £2,155 and Restricted Funds of £21,425. This latter amount comprised of a National Lottery Community Fund Grant for a part time worker £19,990 and the proceeds of crowdfunding for murals for the Children's library £1,435. Self generated receipts included donations from the regular and special event cafes held in the library £5,712 and bank interest received £548.
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	Money not needed for day to day expenses was held in interest paying accounts at banks and building societies.
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	The increased level of operations can no longer be managed solely by volunteer hours. In order to maintain and increase our activity we need to obtain funds from grant making bodies to continue to employ our worker. The employee works on a one year fixed term contract expiring in September 2025. At the balance sheet date the charity was actively seeking grants to fund this role for another 12 month period. This funding was confirmed in December 2025 and the worker was re-engaged in January 2026.

Other

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:

Type of governing document (trust deed, royal charter)

Para 1.25

The charity's constitution is based on the Charity Commission's Foundation Model Constitution

How is the charity constituted?

Para 1.25

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

(e.g. unincorporated)

Friends of Lancaster Library

Trustees' Report for the year ended 30th June 2025 (continued)

association, CIO)

Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees

Para 1.25

The initial Trustees had been members of The Friends voluntary community group. The Trustees advertise for additional Trustees using local posters, the local CVS bulletin and website and through social media. Candidates are interviewed by and selections made by the Trustees and references are obtained before appointment.

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees

Para 1.51

Trustees are provided with copies of the charity's constitution and the Charity Commission's CC3 documents and mentored by existing Trustees. Where necessary external training will be used.

The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works

Para 1.51

The charity has a Board of Trustees, and various sub-committees e.g. Finance and Fundraising with a Trustee on each. The fixed term employee reports to the Chair of the Charity.

Relationship with any related parties

Para 1.51

FOLL is a member of Lancaster & District Community Volunteer Solutions and we signpost the public to various other voluntary community groups as appropriate.

Other

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Friends of Lancaster Library
Other name the charity uses	FOLL
Registered charity number	1208883
Charity's principal address	c/o Lancaster Central Library Market Square Market Street Lancaster LA1 1HY

Trustees' Report for the year ended 30th June 2025 (continued)

[illegible]

10

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name

Dates acted if not for whole year
Not applicable

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity Not applicable

Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects Not applicable

Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets Not applicable

Additional information (optional)

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
Independent Examiner	G Peter Fielding	2 Hoghton Close, Lancaster. Lancashire. LA1 5UF
Bank	Virgin Money	94-96 Briggate, Leeds West Yorkshire, LS1 6NP

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

--

Other optional information

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Declarations

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)

	
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Full name(s)

Richard Frank Kenworthy	Cathryn Elizabeth Morton
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Position (eg Secretary,
Chair, etc)

Treasurer	Secretary
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Date

27/04/2026	
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27/04/2026



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Friends of Lancaster Library CIO

**On accounts for the year
ended**

30 June 2025

**Charity no
(if any)**

1208883

Set out on pages

15-16

(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 30/06/2025

**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**

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:

Date:

7 January 2026

Name:

G Peter Fielding

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

FCA - Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales

Address:	2 Hoghton Close
	Lancaster
	Lancashire LA1 5UF

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.

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CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Friends of Lancaster Library

1208883

CC16a

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	28/06/2024	To	30/06/2025
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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					
Donation received from FOLL voluntary community group on its cessation of activities	2,155	21,425	-	23,580	-
Cash donations received from Regular Pop Up Café	2,942	-	-	2,942	-
Card donations received from Regular Pop Up Café	1,581	-	-	1,581	-
Donations received from Light Up Lancaster Event Evening Cafés	545	-	-	545	-
Donations received at Fun Palace Café	287	-	-	287	-
Donations received from Cafes at other events	357	-	-	357	-
Donations received at Talks	149	-	-	149	-
Interest received and cashback	548	-	-	548	-
Bank compensation fee	175	-	-	175	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	8,739	21,425	-	30,164	-
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	8,739	21,425	-	30,164	-
A3 Payments					
Items bought for Lancaster Library	1,037	-	-	1,037	-
Library Events & Activities	1,119	-	-	1,119	-
Children's Library Murals	-	1,555	-	1,555	-
Library Garden Maintenance	198	-	-	198	-
Café expenses	1,964	-	-	1,964	-
Charity donations	723	-	-	723	-
Stationery & Office Expenses	320	-	-	320	-
Publicity	165	-	-	165	-
Salary costs	-	14,366	-	14,366	-
HR Services	-	289	-	289	-
Insurance	-	143	-	143	-
Training	48	24	-	72	-
Card reader charges	30	-	-	30	-
Sub total	5,604	16,377	-	21,981	-
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	5,604	16,377	-	21,981	-
Net of receipts/(payments)	3,135	5,048	-	8,183	-
A5 Transfers between funds	-	120	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	3,015	5,168	-	8,183	-

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	Virgin Money Current Account	769	5,168	-
	Various Virgin Money Notice Accounts	2,246	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	3,015	5,168	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK

	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	HMRC Creditor	RESTRICTED	464	22/07/2025
			-	
			-	
			-	

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

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Richard Kenworthy FCMA	27/04/2026
	Cathryn Morton	27/04/2026