

20th LIBRARY 25

ANNUAL REPORT

WHERE IMAGINATION
THRIVES

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Objectives and Activities

Our aims

Our aim, is to support and provide for the play and education of children within the London Borough of Lewisham by providing stimulating toys and play equipment. We cater for children from 0 up to around the age of 8. Our range of toys is vast and our toys represent the diverse community we operate in. We have toys for visually impaired children, children on the autistic spectrum and other special needs.

Our objectives

Our objectives are set to reflect the aims of the toy library and to build on and develop the work we have done in previous years. In setting our objectives and planning our activities, our trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance. Our objectives for this period were:

- To create a sustainable plan for the future of the toy library, given news of the upcoming redevelopment of Lewisham, which includes the demolition of the section of the shopping centre that houses the toy library
- To focus on fundraising to ensure that we can continue to provide an affordable offer so that all families in the local area can have access to play
- To support our toy librarians as demand continues to increase so that they can continue to provide a high quality service for members

Achievements and Performance

Chair's Report

Trustees & Volunteers

The Board of Trustees continue to collaborate closely with our dedicated librarians to focus on improvement and innovation, ensuring the Toy Library's offerings meet the evolving needs of the Lewisham community.

The day-to-day operation of the Toy Library relies entirely not only on our librarians, but also our trusted team of volunteers who welcome members into the library and make sure that they have access to the right toys that will bring a little joy into your child's lives. We are so grateful for the countless hours of their time and selfless dedication—we simply could not operate without them.

We are always seeking to grow our team! If you have time and skills to offer and are interested in becoming a trustee or volunteer, please get in touch. We are really flexible so you can choose to help out in the library itself, or take on a special project from home to help us grow. We also wanted to say thank you to the anonymous members who nominated us for the Mayor of Lewisham's Community Award for Faith or Community Group for recognising the hard work of the team.

Librarians

Magdalena, our Toy Library Manager, continues to provide outstanding service to our members. Her unwavering passion ensures that not only does the library run like clockwork, she is always ready to make our members feel welcome and guide them through our extensive range of toys and resources.

We are delighted that Olivia's role as a member-facing toy librarian has continued to be such a success. Her positive, supportive presence and commitment to our members make her a truly valuable and fantastic addition to the team.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to both Magdalena and Olivia for their commitment to making the Lewisham Toy Library such a welcoming and invaluable resource for the community this year.

Website

Our website, lewishamtoylibrary.org.uk, performed strongly:

- **Visitor Numbers:** In 2024-25, the site received 43,427 page views from 17,904 active sessions.
- **Top Pages:** The homepage remains the most visited page, followed by the party hire and membership joining pages.

Premises

While we were unclear on when the next phase of Lewisham's redevelopment will happen, we have been reassured by Landsec, the landlord is keen to support us as we provide an invaluable service for families. .

Future Projects

Building on the foundation laid this past year, we are committed to key strategic initiatives that will ensure the long-term strength, stability, and relevance of Lewisham Toy Library.

Infrastructure and Sustainability

- **Premises Search:** The relocation to a new, suitable premise remains a high priority. We will continue the diligent search for a space that is not only practical for the library and accessible for our members but is also financially sustainable for our long-term future.
- **Income Generation and Diversification:** To ensure financial stability and reduce our deficit, we will actively diversify our income streams and seek new strategic partnerships. This will enable us to widen our essential offering to the community.

User and Team Experience

- **Streamlined Member Experience:** A core goal is to significantly improve the user experience for all members. This includes reviewing and enhancing the process for borrowing, renewing, and returning toys to create a smoother, more efficient system for members, volunteers, and librarians alike.
- **Volunteer Growth and Support:** We will focus on building our invaluable pool of volunteers. This includes strengthening recruitment efforts and investing in improved systems and training to better support their dedication and commitment.

Enhanced Digital Presence and Outreach

Our strategic marketing efforts will be central to expanding our reach and engagement:

- **Digital Team Expansion:** We aim to recruit new volunteers with skills in social media and content creation to improve the frequency and quality of our posts, leveraging our existing tools like Canva.
 - **Content Development:** We will strategically develop content to promote our services to community partners, and expand and optimise our pages dedicated to party hire and donations.
-

We approach this Annual General Meeting with renewed hope and commitment to operating the best possible service for our members, our community, and our dedicated team. The Board of Trustees, working alongside our librarians, will continue to drive focus on improving and innovating the Lewisham Toy Library's essential community offering throughout the coming year.

Toy Library Manager's Report

Toy Librarian's Report

Overview

Lewisham Toy Library has not only survived another year but it is thriving. The large amounts of donations and new members are keeping us busy and well stocked. So much so, we have been struggling with the space and appointments to accommodate everybody.

The 2024/2025 year started off strong and slowed down with an average of approximately 30 new members every month. We currently have 700 active subscribers and nearly 3000 contacts.

We decided to keep the appointment system in place due to the space still being very limited and stock and demand rising rapidly.

Volunteers

We have a steady number of volunteers, with Martin being our longest standing volunteer and Gina and Mounira being our newest but oh so valued additions.

Mark has stepped up during our time of need and filled Olivia's and Magdalena's shoes when both were recovering from medical emergencies – thank you Mark!

We also welcomed Mark's and Laura's youngest sibling – Mattie, who is following in his siblings footsteps and doing his DofE.

We are also continuing our work with Allison Norris, who is a work experience officer for supported learning at Lewisham College.

Big thank you to Ellie M. for taking stock home and numbering endless puzzle pieces etc.

Stock

We are currently nearing the 7000 toys mark and keeping a close eye on our stock so we are always able to offer safe and attractive items for our members to borrow.

Our party hire is as popular as ever.

Overview

This has been yet another busy year for the library, which we are always grateful for as it feels nice to be needed:)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our volunteers and members for the respect, love and support (and sweet treats!!!!) – it's what keeps us going.

Financial Review

Treasurer's Report

During the financial year to 31 March 2025, I am pleased to report that Lewisham Toy Library has continued to maintain a solid financial position, successfully managing operational costs whilst preserving a healthy reserves position. The organisation has demonstrated resilience in a challenging economic environment, with operational income increasing compared to the prior financial year, supported by supplementary grant funding.

Income

In the financial year to 31 March 2025, total receipts reached £41,456, an increase of 6% compared to prior year receipts of £39,106. This improvement reflects continued strong membership engagement..

Membership and Service Income: £35,977

Grant and donations Income: £5,479

Other key funding sources included:

- Benevity community giving platform: £5,479

Costs

Total payments for the year were £44,106, representing a 6% increase from prior year expenditure of £41,469.

Staff costs remain the largest operational expense (79%) and reflect the continuation of the second toy librarian position on a fixed-term contract basis. This investment has enabled the organisation to expand operating hours and service capacity, enhancing member experience and community reach. Salaries, PAYE, and pension contributions relating to the period totalled

£33,258, broadly consistent with the prior year full-year operation of this enhanced staffing model.

Financial Position and Reserves

At 31 March 2025, the organisation maintains a healthy reserves position of £78,127 (including amounts due not yet received and accrued costs), reflecting disciplined financial management and prudent cash flow control.

Reserve assessment:

Current reserves represent approximately 22 months of running costs based on average monthly expenditure of £3,571. This significantly exceeds the organisation's stated reserves policy of maintaining 3 months of running costs (equivalent to approximately £10,700).

Whilst the enhanced reserves position provides excellent financial security and flexibility for investment in service improvement and strategic initiatives, trustees should remain cognisant that the current staffing model (particularly the second librarian position) was initially justified as a fixed-term investment. The organisational sustainability of this model is dependent upon either:

1. Increasing operational income through membership growth and new revenue streams, or
2. Securing sustainable external funding to cover the incremental salary costs

The healthy reserves position should be viewed as a strategic asset to fund innovation and growth rather than as a long-term subsidy for fixed costs.

Looking Forward

The Lewisham Toy Library enters the new financial year in a strong position. Key considerations include:

1. Sustainability Planning: Development of medium-term funding and income growth strategies to ensure the second librarian position becomes sustainably funded through operations or grants rather than reserves
2. Revenue Diversification: Exploration of new income streams and service offerings to complement core membership income
3. Grant Funding: Continued pursuit of restricted and unrestricted grant funding to support strategic priorities
4. Reserve Deployment: Consideration of appropriate deployment of reserves to fund capital improvements, service enhancements, or strategic initiatives that improve long-term sustainability
5. Financial Monitoring: Continuation of detailed monthly financial tracking to maintain visibility of operational performance and early identification of variances

Conclusion

The 2024-25 financial year has been a successful one for Lewisham Toy Library. Income growth has been achieved, operational costs have been well-managed, and the organization maintains a strong financial foundation. The organisation's commitment to accessible services for families and children in Lewisham continues to be supported by a dedicated team of librarians and volunteers.

The organisation is well-positioned for the year ahead and I am confident in its continued success in delivering excellent community services.

Structure, Governance & Management

The Trustees of the Toy Library are responsible for the overall management and control of the charity and meet monthly to guide, plan and review the work of the charity.

The Toy Library is an unincorporated association and all trustees and staff adhere to the governing documents (Constitution and Code of Governance) to ensure that the charity is delivering its objectives and is managed effectively.

The Chair of the board of trustees is responsible for the personnel management of employed library staff and the employed librarians are responsible for the management and guidance for the Toy Library's volunteers.

The Treasurer is responsible for overseeing the financial management of the Library and to assist with this, the charity employs a bookkeeper to prepare accounts and reports for monthly review by the Treasurer and Trustee committee

Trustee selection

The board of Trustees seek to ensure that there is a good breadth and depth of skills and experience on the board to effectively carry out its duties. When recruiting new trustees we look for individuals who:

- Align to the aims of the Toy Library and have an interest in the work we do.
- Represent our local community and member base
- Bring skills or experience which will enhance the board of trustees and ultimately benefit the library and its members.

We advertise for trustees locally in the Toy Library, in local forums (e.g. Lewisham Local) and via our social media channels. Potential Trustees are invited to meet with the current board at a monthly Trustee meeting and from there are officially voted to the board by our library members at the next AGM.

All trustees give of their time freely and no remuneration or expenses were paid in the year. No Trustee or person connected with a Trustee received any benefit in relation to the Toy Library and their work as a member of the board.

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Details

Lewisham Toy Library

Registered Charity Number: 271496

Address: Unit 46 Molesworth Street, London SE13 7EP

Trustee Details

The following Trustees acted for the charity within the financial year covered by this report.

Trustee Name	Position held on board	Date appointed	Date of resignation	Appointed by
Jennifer Luk	Co-Chair	October 2019	n/a	AGM member vote 2019
Elizabeth Stevenson	Co-Chair	September 2022	n/a	AGM member vote 2022
Elisabeth Poirel	Secretary	January 2014	n/a	AGM member vote 2014
Justine Vella	Trustee	July 2019	10/01/26	AGM member vote 2019
Sara Hill	Trustee	November 2020	01/09/2025	Board of trustees 2020
Jill Hamilton	Trustee	February 2022	n/a	Board of Trustees 2021
Harry Nandakumar	Trustee	August 2025	n/a	Board of trustees 2025
Alice Alfert	Trustee	May 2025	On mat leave	Board of trustees 2025
Tanuj Modasia-Shah	Treasurer	Feb 2025	n/a	Board of trustees 2025

Declarations

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signature: Full name: Jennifer Luk Position: Co-Chair of the board of trustees Date: 09/01/2026	Signature: Full name: Elizabeth Stevenson Position: Co-Chair of the board of trustees Date: 09/01/2026
Signature: Full name: Elisabeth Poirer Position: Secretary Date: 09/01/2026	Signature: Full name: Tanuj Modasia-Shah Position: Treasurer Date: 09/01/2026
Signature: Full name: Alice Alfert Position: Trustee Date: 09/01/2026	Signature: Full name: Harry Nandakumar Position: Trustee Date: 09/01/2026
Signature: Full name: Jill Hamilton Position: Trustee Date: 09/01/2026	

Independent examiner's report

To the trustees of

Lewisham Toy Library

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Lewisham Toy Library for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of the report

As the charity trustees of Lewisham Toy Library 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 charity'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 that give me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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.

Caroline Sharp FCA, DChA
55 Canberra Road
LONDON
SE7 8PF

Date: **26 January 2026**



Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	01-Apr-24	To	31-Mar-25
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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					
Rothsay Life PLC	-	-	-	-	2,500
Bright Funds	-	-	-	-	1,381
Grant from Groundwork UK	-	-	-	-	500
Other donations and gifts	7,147	-	-	7,147	4,322
Toy Library membership subs and fines	27,909	-	-	27,909	25,540
Toy sales	5,803	-	-	5,803	3,351
Party hire	117	-	-	117	1,063
Lewisham Lottery	178	-	-	178	274
Shopmobility	23	-	-	23	20
Bank interest	279	-	-	279	155
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	41,456	-	-	41,456	39,106
Total receipts	41,456	-	-	41,456	39,106
A3 Payments					
Staff costs	35,199	-	-	35,199	32,158
Volunteer expenses	254	-	-	254	-
Insurance	1,328	-	-	1,328	1,270
Electricity	1,577	-	-	1,577	1,615
Cleaning	227	-	-	227	156
Library expenses	1,363	-	-	1,363	2,452
Toys	547	-	-	547	1,136
Telecom Expense	317	-	-	317	295
Independent examiner	750	-	-	750	750
Bookkeeping and accountancy	650	-	-	650	600
Subscriptions	114	-	-	114	251
Bank fees	570	-	-	570	631
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	44,106	-	-	44,106	41,469
Total payments	44,106	-	-	44,106	41,469
Net of (payments)/receipts	(2,651)	-	-	(2,651)	(2,363)
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end (see note 1 below)	76,795	-	-	76,795	79,158
Cash funds this year end	74,144	-	-	74,144	76,795



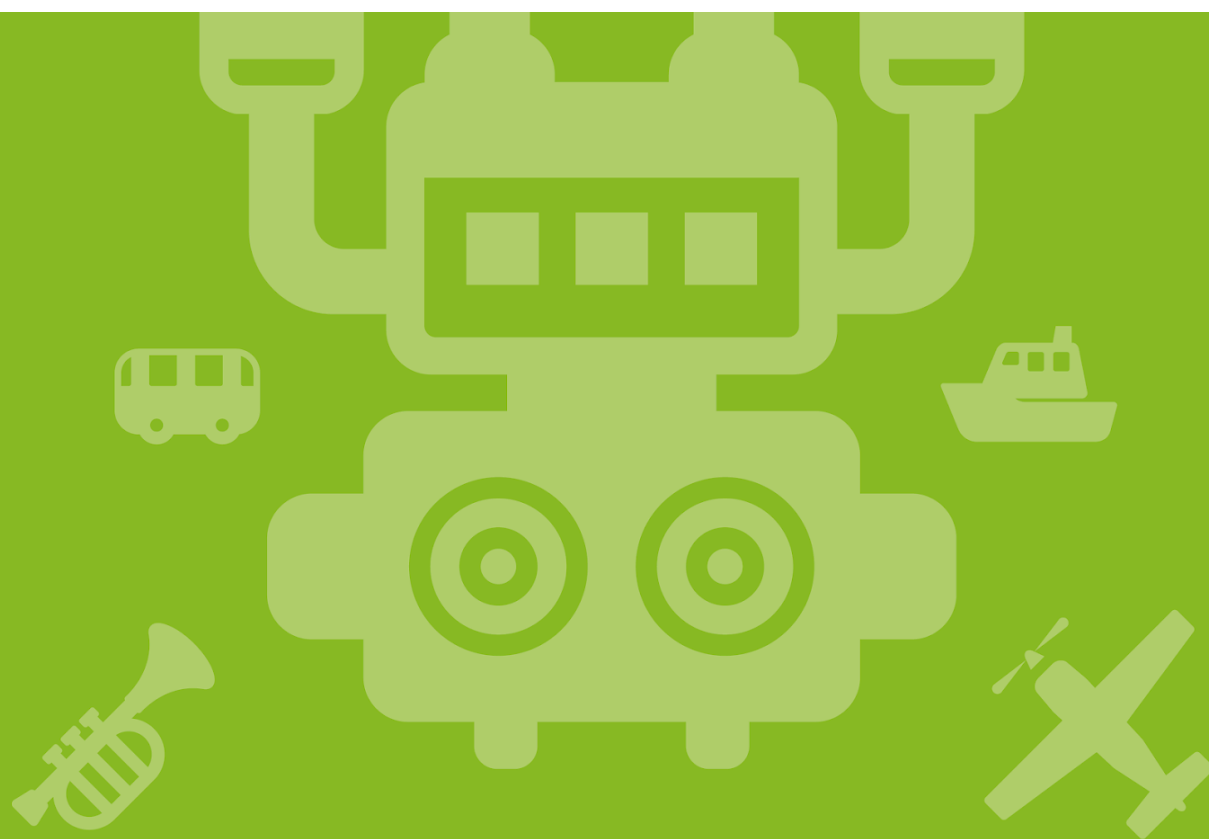
Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	01-Apr-24	To	31-Mar-25
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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	CAF Bank	71,934	-	-
	PayPal	1,084	-	-
	Zettle	200	-	-
	Barclays	-	-	-
	Petty Cash	926	-	-
	Total cash funds	74,144	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	HMRC - refund of employers allowance from prior years	5,645	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B5 Liabilities	Accruals for costs incurred paid after year end	Unrestricted		
			-	
			-	
Signed on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
		TANUJ MODASIA-SHAH	09/01/2026	



WHERE IMAGINATION THRIVES



Lewisham Shopping Centre



Tues, Wed, Friday, Saturday



10am to 3pm



0208 297 2735



lewishamtoylibrary.org.uk



librarian@lewishamtoylibrary.org.uk



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