

**THE BLISS TRUST**

**TRUSTEES' REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 5<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2025**

**Charity No: 297956**

# **THE BLISS TRUST**

## **REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**

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**THE BLISS TRUST**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 5<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2025**

The Trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 5<sup>th</sup> April 2025.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the accounts and comply with the Charity's Trust Deed, the Charities Act 2011 and guidance issued by the Charity Commission.

**OUR PURPOSE AND ACTIVITIES**

The Trust was formed to promote and advance the art of music and fulfils its objectives through the payment of grants and awards to individuals and groups involved in the field of music.

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

During the year the Trust continued to award grants totalling £7,050 (2024 – £5,595) as detailed in note 2 to the accounts. Funds were also provided to organisations to support recordings. For 2024/25 Special Project funds totalling £26,263 (2024 – £2,475) was paid as detailed in note 3 to the accounts

**Trustees**

There have been no changes to the personnel of the Bliss Trust in the period under review.

**Trust Income**

During this year a modest and welcome growth in income has occurred due to the increased number of performances encouraged by the start of the 50th Anniversary of the Composer's death and the 50 for 50 Project run in partnership with the Arthur Bliss Society.

**Grants**

**General (£1950)**

These included grants awarded to the Elgar Sinfonia of London for a performance of Bliss's Piano Concerto, the English Music Festival, and a recording of Bliss's Cello Concerto by Guy Johnston, with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Andrew Manze.

**Performance Grants for 50 For 50 (£3900)**

Grants in this category, towards performances of Bliss's music, were awarded to, amongst others, Crowthorne Symphony Orchestra (A Colour Symphony), Royal Concert Halls Nottingham (Cello Concerto and Metamorphic Variations), Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (Piano Concerto) and the Harrogate Symphony Orchestra (Cello Concerto and Things to Come).

**Student Awards (£1200)**

These comprised awards for composer Laila Arafah (enabling her to attend the Aspen Festival in the USA; Cambridge University Prize (Roseanna Dunn); and the Sound and Music Summer School.

**Special Projects**

*Bliss and Dance Book*

Following successful negotiations, a contract has been agreed between the Trust and Unicorn Book Publishers with a projected publication date of May 2026. The editor, Jennifer Jackson, has continued to work on this book and, in addition, was awarded a travel grant by the Trustees in order to travel to the USA to research Bliss's final ballet, *The Lady of Shalott*, which was commissioned, and premiered by the San Francisco ballet.

*Viola Concerto*

Phil Wilby completed his orchestration of Bliss's Viola Sonata and negotiations with Wise Music/Novello for the publication of the work were agreed. Its first performance under the auspices of the Ryedale Festival, will take place in Ripon Cathedral on 18 July 2025 with soloist Timothy Ridout, and the Orchestra of Opera North conducted by Tom Featherstonhaugh.

**THE BLISS TRUST**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT (Cont/d)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 5<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2025**

*Arrangements*

During the year Robert Gower made an organ arrangement of the instrumental accompaniment to Bliss's choral work, *The World is Charged by the grandeur of God*. This is to be published by Wise Music/Novello with the hope that this will encourage more performances of the work.

*Recording of Bliss's Metamorphic Variations and Miracle in the Gorbals*

The significance of this collaboration with Chandos Records and the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Michael Seal, is that it is the first complete recording of *Metamorphic Variations* with the two movements cut at its premiere and subsequent performances and recording, reinstated. This new recording of Bliss's second ballet *Miracle in the Gorbals* is the first for 14 years. It is scheduled for release in October 2025.

**50 For 50 – A Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Death of Sir Arthur Bliss**

Such has been the positive response from performing organisations and artists that the Trust was quick to see that the anniversary performances could be spread over two concert seasons. 2024-25 and 2025-26. The anniversary events therefore commenced on 16 September 2024 at St Anne's Cathedral, Leeds, when Darius Battiwalla played Robert Gower's organ arrangement of *The Rout Trot*. Other performances during the autumn included *Conversations* at the Leicester International Music Festival, two performances of Bliss's *Cello Concerto* in Nottingham and Liverpool, performed by Guy Johnston, with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Andrew Manze, and *A Colour Symphony* by the Crowthorne Symphony Orchestra performed in Wokingham.

In January 2025 David Aspen with Kathryn Mosely gave performances of Bliss's *Viola Sonata* in Accrington, Taunton and London, and the *March from Things To Come* was featured in BBC Radio 3's *Friday Night is Music Night* when Richard Balcombe conducted it with the BBC Concert Orchestra at the Chichester Festival Theatre. The Talland String Quartet, alumni of the RNCM, performed the *String Quartet in A* at Barrow in Furness and Ambleside, and the *Clarinet Quintet* received its first Anniversary performance by Ajas Begus and the Marmen Quartet in Cork.

On 26 February the BBC Philharmonic conducted by Michael Seal gave an all-Bliss concert at the Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham. The main work performed was the first complete performance of Bliss's *Metamorphic Variations*, thus restoring the 2 movements cut at the first performance and at subsequent performances in Bliss's lifetime. Roderick Williams and Andrew West included *Siege* from the *Seven American Poems* in their recital programme, *'A Touch of the Exotic'*, performing it at for example, the Barnes Festival, Leeds Lieder and the Wigmore Hall.

The period under review concluded with a day of performances and talks at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire on 27 March, the actual anniversary of Bliss's death. These included talks by Ben Earle, Richard Whitehouse and Ian Venables, as well as performances of *Masks*, *Triptych*, *Viola Sonata*, *Violin Concerto* (violin with piano), *Piano Quartet*, and *Two Nursery Rhymes*. The Performers were Mark Bebbington, David Aspin, Robert Markham, Chu-Yu Yang, Charles Matthews, Rebecca Watson, Maria Joao Antunes, Chian Chian Hsu, Maria Willshire, Bianca Vancea and Anna Thirkettle. Finally, there was also a further performance of the *Cello Concerto* with a young soloist, Lily Dai, and the Harrogate Symphony Orchestra.

**Recordings**

The following works were recorded during this financial year with the support of the Trust : *Cello Concerto* (Guy Johnson, Andrew Manze, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra); *Metamorphic Variations* (complete) & *Miracle in the Gorbals* (complete) Chandos; *Sonata for Piano and Violin* (Chu-Yu Yang, Eric McElroy) SOMM. The planned recording of the *Piano Concerto* by Mark Bebbington and the RLPO has to be postponed due to a finger injury Mr Bebbington sustained. Plans are in progress to reschedule the recording for the 2026-27 season.

**Bliss Biography**

Paul Spicer's critical biography of Bliss, *Arthur Bliss Standing Out From the Crowd*, published in 2023, continued to be recognised for its qualities by a Certificate of Merit from the Association for Recorded Sound Collections, award for Excellence.

**Arthur Bliss Society**

The Trust and Arthur Bliss Society have continued to work closely and creatively in the promotion of Bliss's music.

**THE BLISS TRUST**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT (Cont/d)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 5<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2025**

**Public benefit statement**

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity' (PD2). The achievements and activities above demonstrate the public benefit arising through the Charity's activities.

**FINANCIAL REVIEW**

The Trust is in a very healthy financial state. The Trustees are satisfied with the Trust's financial position with total cash balance as at 5<sup>th</sup> April 2025 amounting to £99,427 (2024 - £115,988), which will enable the Trustees to finance future charitable projects.

The Trustees do not intend to set aside any sums for funds other than for general purposes. The Trustees believe that current finances are sufficient for the Trust to continue to further its objectives and do not plan any specific fund raising exercises.

**Reserves Policy**

It is the policy of the Trustees to maintain reserves at a sufficient level to enable activities in the medium term. Reserves are at a level to guarantee the continuation of activities despite any unexpected shortfalls in income.

**Risk**

The Trustees minimise risk both in activities and investment exposure by maintaining a close control of daily operations and restricting investments to low risk deposits.

**PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS**

The Trustees hope to maintain activities through the award of grants at similar levels to those of the current year.

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

**Governing document**

The Trust was formed through the establishment of a Declaration of Trust dated 13<sup>th</sup> May 1986 with a Deed of Release date of 7<sup>th</sup> July 1987. A Supplement Trust Deed was signed on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1987 and the Trust was registered as a charity on 12<sup>th</sup> November 1987 under charity number 297956.

**Status**

The Trust is an unincorporated association whose aims and objectives, together with its structure and governance, are determined by its constitution.

**Organisation**

The Trust is organised so that the Trustees meet periodically to manage its affairs and review its activities to date.

**Appointment of trustees**

The Trustees for the year were as listed below. Appointment as Trustee is by ballot of the existing Trustees.

The Trustees have unlimited investment powers.

**THE BLISS TRUST**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT (Cont/d)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 5<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2025**

**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

**Trustees**

Andrew Burn  
Elizabeth Travis  
Richard Andrewes  
Lewis Foreman  
Anna Pensaert  
Helen Kotz  
Elizabeth Pooley  
Caroline Secombe  
Ian Sanderson  
Liam Taylor West

**Secretary:** Elizabeth Pooley

**Website:** [www.blisstrust.org](http://www.blisstrust.org)

**Charity Number:** 297956

**Registered Office:** Copse House, Moorside, Sturminster Newton, Dorset DT10 1HJ

**Independent Examiner:** David Terry  
Ramon Lee Ltd, 93 Tabernacle Street, London EC2A 4BA

**Bankers:** NatWest Plc., 127 Kilburn High Road, London NW6 6JL

**Solicitors:** Taylor Wessing, 5 New Street Square, London EC4A 3TW

**STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES**

The charity Trustees are responsible for preparing a Trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the applicable Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations and the provisions of the Trust Deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity's website in accordance with legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements.

**APPROVAL**

This report was approved by the Trustees on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025 and signed on its behalf.



**ANDREW BURN**  
**TRUSTEE**

**2<sup>ND</sup> JULY 2025**

# **REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT EXAMINER TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE BLISS TRUST**

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 5<sup>th</sup> April 2025, which are set out on pages 7 to 10.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with the Charities Act 2011. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an independent examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for my Independent Examination, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

## **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 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

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.



**DAVID TERRY – Chartered Accountant**  
**RAMON LEE LTD**  
**93 TABERNACLE STREET**  
**LONDON EC2A 4BA**

**2<sup>ND</sup> JULY 2025**

**THE BLISS TRUST**  
**RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 5<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2025**

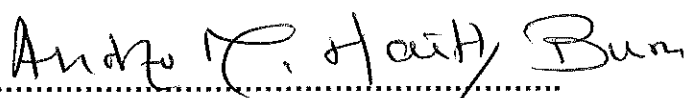
	<u>Notes</u>	<u>UNRESTRICTED</u> 2025 £	2024 £
<b>RECEIPTS</b>			
Donation	2	1,042	-
Bank interest		2,191	2,100
Royalties		26,523	20,455
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<u>29,756</u>	<u>22,555</u>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>			
Grants and donations paid	3	7,050	5,595
Special Projects	4	26,263	2,475
Management and administration	5	13,004	19,356
<b>Total payments</b>		<u>46,317</u>	<u>27,426</u>
<b>Net receipts / (payments) for the period</b>		(16,561)	(4,871)
Bank balances as at 6th April 2024		115,988	120,859
Bank balances as at 5th April 2025		<u>99,427</u>	<u>115,988</u>



**THE BLISS TRUST**  
**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**  
**AS AT 5<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2025**

	2025 £	2024 £
<b>Cash Funds</b>		
Bank deposit accounts	82,329	91,402
Bank current account	17,098	24,586
	<u>99,427</u>	<u>115,988</u>

Approved by the Trustees on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

  
.....  
ANDREW BURN - TRUSTEE

**THE BLISS TRUST**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 5<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2025**

**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

The receipts and payment accounts have been drawn up as a summary of the receipts and payments made during the year by the charity. Amounts are included as received by the charity or as cheques are drawn. The accounts and statements do not include accruals and prepayments in respect of income and expenses.

The receipt and payment accounts and statements of assets and liabilities have been prepared following the guidance for accounting for smaller charities issued by the Charity Commission.

**2. DONATIONS**

Donations received in the year were as follows:

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>Total 2025</b>	<b>Total 2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
D Ellis Ryedale - Arthur Bliss Society (for Viola Concerto)	1,042	-	1,042	-
	<u>1,042</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,042</u>	<u>-</u>

**3. GRANTS PAYABLE**

Grants made to institutions were as follows:

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>Total 2025</b>	<b>Total 2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Grants</b>				
A Brown - Elgar Sinfonia	200	-	200	-
Leilah Arafah - travel grant	200	-	200	-
Bliss Society event grant	250	-	250	-
Crowthorne Symphony Orchestra	400	-	400	-
Gloucester Music Society	150	-	150	-
Royal Centre (Nottingham)	1,000	-	1,000	-
Recording of Cello Concerto	1,000	-	1,000	-
Viola Sonata performance	100	-	100	-
Cambridge Award	500	-	500	-
Chu Yu Yang - grant to recording	200	-	200	-
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra	1,500	-	1,500	-
Harrogate Symphony Orchestra	500	-	500	-
Ayaka Tanimoto - performance in Japan	100	-	100	-
Richard Whitehouse	150	-	150	-
Sound & Music - grant to Summer School	500	-	500	500
English Music Festival	300	-	300	300
Sound & Music - grant towards ISCM for composer	-	-	-	500
Clare Howick - grant towards recording costs	-	-	-	500
Chandos Records - grant towards CDs	-	-	-	540
Jennifer Jackson	-	-	-	1,000
RSNO	-	-	-	300
Arthur Bliss Society	-	-	-	280
Sam Rudd Jones	-	-	-	350
Black Dyke Band	-	-	-	1,000
Worcestershire Smyphony Orchestra	-	-	-	325
	<u>7,050</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,050</u>	<u>5,595</u>

**THE BLISS TRUST**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (Cont/d)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 5<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2025**

**4. SPECIAL PROJECTS**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Chandos Records re new recordings	-	10,000	10,000	-
Organ and Viola arrangements of Bliss's music	-	6,263	6,263	2,125
New Book "Bliss and Dance"	-	10,000	10,000	-
Novello	-	-	-	350
	<u>-</u>	<u>26,263</u>	<u>26,263</u>	<u>2,475</u>

**5. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

	General Support costs £	Governance costs £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Accountancy & administration	-	1,620	1,620	1,500
Administrative expenses reimbursed	361	-	361	2,221
Travelling expenses	3,549	-	3,549	3,091
Secretarial remuneration	6,392	-	6,392	7,621
Sundries (CDs / Mail Box / website / score)	1,082	-	1,082	3,725
	<u>11,384</u>	<u>1,620</u>	<u>13,004</u>	<u>18,158</u>

**6. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS**

	at 06.04.24 £	Income £	Expenditure £	at 05.04.25 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>				
General Funds	115,988	29,756	46,316	99,428
Total funds	<u>115,988</u>	<u>29,756</u>	<u>46,316</u>	<u>99,428</u>

**Movement of funds – previous year:**

	at 06.04.23 £	Income £	Expenditure £	at 05.04.24 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>				
General Funds	120,859	22,555	27,426	115,988
Total funds	<u>120,859</u>	<u>22,555</u>	<u>27,426</u>	<u>115,988</u>

**THE BLISS TRUST**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (Cont/d)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 5<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2025**

**7. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

During the year one Trustee (2024 – one) received remuneration of £6,392 (2024 - £7,621) in respect of her role as Secretary to the Trust.

Two Trustees (2024 – two) received reimbursed administrative expenses totalling £361 (2024 - £2,221).

Travel & subsistence cost reimbursements totalling £3,549 (2024 - £2,500) were paid to nine Trustees (2024 – eight) and £207 (2024 - £125) travel cost reimbursements were made to two (2024 – two) other individual, who was invited to attend the Trustees meetings held during the year.