

Pollock's Toy Museum Trust

Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Registered Charity Number : 313622

Pollock's Toy Museum Trust
Content of the Accounts
for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Page
Trustee report	1 - 6
Receipts and Payments Accounts	7
Statement of assets and liabilities	8
Independent Examiners Report	9

Pollock's Toy Museum Trust (Registered Charity 313622)

Chairman's Annual Report for 2024

Trustees for 2024

Alan Powers (Chairman)
Debby Brown
Edward Coulson
Emily Cross (elected during 2024)
Lettice Kemp
Panagiota Kotoula (elected during 2024)
Imogen Magnus
Mary Clare Martin
Sarah Peasgood
David Powell

Background

Pollock's Toy Museum as founded in 1956 by Marguerite Fawdry, following her purchase of Benjamin Pollock Ltd., a company set up ten years previously to promote Victorian toy theatre and safeguard the historic material removed from the shop of Benjamin Pollock in Hoxton Street in 1944.

The Museum was conceived as an adjunct to the toy theatre business and was one of several toy museums, focused on the nineteenth century, founded around the same time. In 1968, Mrs Fawdry established a charitable trust to hold the museum collection and pursue its educational purposes. In 1969, the museum and shop moved to new premises, No.1 Scala Street, W1 (later connected to No.41 Whitfield Street, an adjoining building).

Recent history

In 2023, the Trustees and other supporters of the Museum including members of the Fawdry family, decided that it was necessary to remove the collection from the building. It was in storage during most of that year, while the Trust negotiated for space at a greatly reduced rent in the Whitgift Centre, Croydon, which houses a number of other arts and social welfare charities. This became available in November, when the collection was moved there. In the same month, the City of London made the shop unit at Nos.32-33 Leadenhall Market available to the Trust, and a selection of from the Museum's collection was installed there, together with appropriate items on sale in an atmospheric setting.

Narrative of 2024

With these two bases, it was possible for the Trustees and other volunteers to make beneficial use of the collection by displaying selected objects in the visually stimulating and imaginative manner that was part of the Museum's historic character. This took place under the direction of Debby Brown, a Trustee who had acted as curator of the Museum since the 1970s and has an intimate knowledge of its contents and the provenance and significance of the objects in terms of the history of toys.

The Croydon site opened in January with a report on BBC London news and other publicity that attracted over 200 visitors on the opening day (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-england-london-68036575>).

The Croydon site was open free to the public every Saturday through the rest of the year, with changing displays from the collection. The Leadenhall Market site was open on two days a week (increased over the pre-Christmas period), with a combination of sales of goods and exhibits from the collection.

Finances

During 2024, the Trust moved into a new era of operation financially, which included a combination of grants for special events and exhibitions, increased retail and wholesale trading, resulting in an increase of annual income.

The Trust holds two accounts with CAF Bank, a Current Account and a Gold Account. The majority of transactions are in the Current Account, but the proceeds from electronic sales of goods (using SumUp Point of Sale devices) are paid directly into the Gold Account. The accounts are managed by Christine Bellon on a voluntary basis, a position she has held since 2019. All banking activity is online. Two online authorisations are needed for all payments.

In addition to Ms Bellon, two trustees are registered with CAF Bank and authorised to make and confirm payments. Two trustees hold Bank Cards (Alan Powers and Lettice Kemp) for making purchases on the Current Account.

A relatively small proportion of the Trust's retail income is received in cash, and this is regularly banked, retaining a small reserve for petty cash purposes.

Collection management

The management of the collection is supervised by Debby Brown, a trustee since 2005 and a formerly employed as curator at the Museum, prior to moving jobs. Her knowledge of the collection is unrivalled, and she has been active in updating and correcting the card catalogue of collection items, prior to the move from Scala Street and in the subsequent period.

In addition, Ms Brown has undertaken cleaning and conservation of items. This is a large task with a considerable backlog from years when there was no qualified curator at the Museum. Volunteer help has been given under her direction by trustee Lettice Kemp and other volunteers. The work on the collection will need to continue for some time ahead, and the arrival of new items adds to the workload.

New Accessions

The Museum received gifts of books and toys during 2024 from members of the public. These were mostly individual items, but there was a noteworthy group of toys and books from the family of the artist John Norris Wood (1930-2015), many of them Victorian amusements and games in excellent condition, with many illustrated books of the period and after. The Oxford Museums Service offered a collection of 'Dynamic Toys' which had circulated as an exhibition, and this was gratefully received.

Activities of the Museum

With support from the National Lottery via Stanley Arts of £5,910, Pollock's created a research, oral history, exhibition and making project based on the toy manufacturers A Barton & Co. founded in Croydon, in 1945 and active until the 1980s, a project extending through spring and summer.

The Museum was represented at the annual Covent Garden May Fayre, which celebrates the tradition of Punch and Judy.

In October, the Museum staged a celebration of the traditional Croydon Walnut Fair, funded by Croydon Council with £2,250, with historical material and images, a lecture by a local history specialist and a selection from the toy collection humorously adapted to evoke the activities of the historic fairs.

In the autumn season, the Museum installed a loan exhibition at the Museum for the Christmas Season. Another small exhibition was held at Dennis Severs House, a museum trust in London, and a further exhibition at a gallery, Townhouse Spitalfields, where two performance events took place.

At Leadenhall Market, the chairman, Alan Powers, was invited by the market management to make artwork for temporary display on hoardings covering work on two shops in the covered market. The images showed pantomime characters from historic toy theatre plays visiting the Market, with the upper windows populated by animals and the end of the panorama dissolving into fairyland. This was enlarged on vinyl sheets and installed. The artist donated the fee to the museum, which was used towards the restoration of the Polyphon (see below).

Exhibition Loans

A loan of toy theatres was made to the Susan Williams-Ellis Foundation at Plas Brondanw, Meirioneth, in conjunction with an exhibition 'Pantomime behind the Mask, June to September.

The Museum collaborated with the Denis Severs House, 18 Folgate Street, Spitalfields, to install an evocation of Benjamin Pollock's prewar Hoxton shop including many original objects that came from it. A special edition of hand-printed etchings, coloured and 'tinselled' in the traditional Victorian manner, was produced for sale in collaboration with the Severs house.

The Museum was invited by The Museum of the Home, London, to install 7 showcases containing a selection of Christmas-themed toys, which was very popular with visitors.

School visits

An existing practice of offering expert educational visits to primary schools in the London area was continued through the year by Jack Fawdry on behalf of the Museum. The visits consist of showing toys as examples of making and materials and also some with moving mechanisms. As Mr Fawdry was unable to continue this activity into 2025, he inducted a volunteer to continue the work.

Performances and Toy Theatre

Toy Theatre, often known generically as 'Pollock's Toy Theatre' is the Museum's distinctive area of expertise. In addition to documenting and researching the subject, Trustees and others maintain a regular practice of live performances using the traditional attractive printed cut-out sheets of characters and scene, in a wooden theatre, including sound effects. These were held regularly at Croydon on Saturdays, open free to the public and popular, especially with children. The Trustees involved were assisted by Judy Tcherniak, an experienced professional actor, in speaking parts in the play, which was a great benefit during the year.

In addition, the performers also presented their productions at The Heath Robinson Museum, Pinner, The Museum of the Home, The Townhouse gallery, Spitalfields, and the Susan Williams-Ellis Foundation at Plas Brondanw, Meirioneth, in conjunction with an exhibition 'Pantomime behind the Mask' to which Pollock's contributed loans of toy theatres. Trustee Sarah Peasgood performs plays for which she draws and writes scripts. The Pollock's trust has facilitated her performances in London. In addition, Sarah regularly performs at the international Toy Theatre Meeting at Preetz, Germany, and represents toy theatre as Chair of the British Puppet and Model Theatre Guild.

Sarah and the Pollock's chair, Alan Powers, are members of the Toy Theatre Trust, established in relation to the fine collection of toy theatre at Pickford's House, Derby, part of the Derby museums. The Trust aims to coordinate initiatives in toy theatre in the UK.

Pollock's Polyphon

The Polyphon, a late nineteenth century mechanical music machine using interchangeable discs, has been a feature of Pollock's at all its addresses. During 2024, the trustees made contact with Lester Smith, a specialist in these machines. He supplied newly made discs and advised that the machine itself was due for maintenance. It was delivered to Mr Smith's workshop in Chichester, stripped down, cleaned and returned to service. It is a source of much pleasure to visitors to the museum and adds a period atmosphere, and of particular interest to children, who are encouraged to start it playing by putting a pre-decimal penny in the slot.

Future planning

In March, the Trustees held a Visioning Day, facilitated by a well-known fundraiser, Anna Whyatt, and attended by about 20 trustees and representatives of other organisations, including Councillors from the London Borough of Hackney. The aims and ambitions of the Museum were discussed, including the ways in which it could present itself to the public and fulfil a mission to extend well-being to disadvantaged members of the community of all ages.

Early in the year, the Trustees had become aware of the impending closure of a number of primary schools in Hackney, owing to falling school enrolment. One of these, Colvestone School, attracted their attention owing to its good location for transport and close to the busy Ridley Road market. Towards the end of the year, this interest became known to the leader of a local group of social enterprises and charities intending to make a bid for the use

of the building. Pollock's became a member of this group and discussions continued through 2025.

Trustee business

Two additional trustees were elected in January 2024, Emily Cross and Panagiota Kotoula. Trustee meetings were held online on 28 February, 26 March, 4 July and 21 October. The papers for these meetings included a detailed Report by the Chairman distributed ahead of the meeting.

Retailing

The Trust has made and traded its own products since 2002, initially greetings cards, but extended in later years to include fine wrapping paper sheets from which toy theatre sets can be made, two books on the history of toy theatre written by trustees and other experts, and further items. In the transfer from Scala Street, it took over items from the now closed company, Benjamin Pollock Ltd., which published chiefly cut-out card theatres. These provided the core of the stock when the Trust took on the management of the shop unit in Leadenhall Market, and subsequently at the Whitgift Centre, Croydon. Two new printings of the card theatres have been ordered during the period under review and are supplied at trade price to other outlets, including the Royal National Theatre. The wrapping paper sheets are also supplied to a range of specialist retailers. The greetings cards were available for sale on Etsy.com and the Trust's books on Amazon.co.uk.

Additional stock has been sourced from appropriate suppliers of traditional toys, many with connections to the museum shop over many years. During 2024, these proved reliable items, mostly at low prices. Some additional items of higher value were added, such as hand-made model boats by a Scottish artist, Edward Smith.

In addition to the two shop outlets, the Trust's products were sold in sites where exhibitions were held with loans from the museum, as listed above, and also at tabletop fairs and other events during the year.

Online sales were suspended during 2024 pending the transfer of the previous website into the name of the Trust.

When the Leadenhall Market shop opened in November 2023, a temporary part-time shop manager, Eleftherios Fitsiolis, was appointed following an interview process, and managed the shop for three days a week on an hourly payment basis, with support from trustees and other volunteers. He needed to attend to academic work at the beginning of 2024 and was replaced by a rota of volunteers who open the shop for limited hours on two days during the week. The Trust is very grateful to the City of London and the Leadenhall Market management for its generous terms for this temporary occupancy, pending a commercial offer for the unit. The footfall can be high at peak times of year and this is great benefit. Many compliments have been paid by visitors about the period charm and ambiance of the shop.

At Croydon, a range of the same products is on offer at a small shop counter which doubles as the reception desk for the museum. This is staffed by a rota of trustees and local volunteers according to their availability.

Alan Powers, Chairman, Pollock's Toy Museum Trust
31 October 2025



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name
Pollock's Toy Museum Trust

No (if any)
313622

CC16a

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date
	1 January 2024		31 December 2024

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 £	
A1 Receipts					
Grants	-	8,160	-	8,160	
Donations	2,275	-	-	2,275	
Event income	1,382	-	-	1,382	
Retail and trade sales	24,002	-	-	24,002	
Commissions	1,500	-	-	1,500	
Interest	451	-	-	451	
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	29,610	8,160	-	37,770	
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	
Total receipts	29,610	8,160	-	37,770	
A3 Payments					
Event and performer costs	509	5,096	-	5,605	
Retail purchases	12,264	-	-	12,264	
Wages	476	-	-	476	
Toy repairs	777	1,332	-	2,109	
Subscriptions	141	-	-	141	
Insurance	939	-	-	939	
Rent	1,716	-	-	1,716	
Rates and Utilities	2,108	-	-	2,108	
Administration and advertising	439	250	-	689	
Bank charges	60	-	-	60	
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	19,429	6,678	-	26,107	
A4 Asset and investment purchases					
Shelving and heater	242	216	-	458	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	242	216	-	458	
Total payments	19,671	6,894	-	26,565	
Net of receipts/(payments)	9,939	1,266	-	11,205	
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	
A6 Cash funds last year end	19,360	-	-	19,360	
Cash funds this year end	29,299	1,266	-	30,565	

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	Current account	389	1,266	-
	Gold Account	28,539	-	-
	Cash in hand	371	-	-
	Total cash funds	29,299	1,266	-
	(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 asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

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

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Alan Power	31/10/2025

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Pollock's Toy Museum Trust

Charity registration number: 313622

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of the Norwich Stroke Survivors' Club

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 December 2024 as set out on pages 7 to 8

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 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:

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



Mark Johnstone FCA

Argents Chartered Accountants
15 Palace Street
NORWICH
Norfolk
NR3 1RT

Date: 31/10/2025