



**ANNUAL REPORT**



**2024/25**

# MAGIC ME WHO WE ARE

Magic Me brings generations together. Through our vibrant programme of arts activities, children, younger and older people meet to create and exchange experiences. They develop individual skills and confidence, build community connection and cohesion, combatting isolation and loneliness.

Working in partnership with our local communities across Tower Hamlets, we have pioneered intergenerational arts for more than 35 years. Growing from this expertise we also run sensory, creative activities in care homes in London and Essex.

We are proud of our growing community of younger and older people, who are building meaningful creative connections across different ages, faiths, cultures and backgrounds.

## OUR VISION:

a world without ageism,  
where everyone can enjoy their  
unique creativity and  
full potential.

## OUR MISSION:

to inspire change, for individuals,  
communities and systems, through  
extraordinary art, sparking magic  
between generations.



# Message from our Chair and Director

## WELCOME TO OUR ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25

This year, since last summer's racist rioting, our work has felt even more urgent and necessary. Sometimes hope feels in short supply. Hate and violent misinformation are deliberately seeking to divide our communities, which are already struggling with ongoing financial pressures.

**We are different people. We come here together to mix and make belonging.**

Older adult

People tell us how much they value the opportunities and hosted spaces that Magic Me offers: places to meet, to make and to imagine new possibilities.

In our experience, the majority of people want to contribute and build community. This Report is full of positive stories of our participants across Tower Hamlets and Essex, their many achievements and the impact of Magic Me programmes. For

example in Bethnal Green, the percentage of younger and older members of our Creative Mix group reporting 'I feel optimistic for the future' grew from 25% to 83% over 7 months.

Magic Me activities grow from ideas generated by younger and older people or are sparked by issues identified by partner organisations.

Through 2025 we have also been excited to partner Wellcome Collection, a leading museum and library exploring health and human experience, to create an artwork challenging ageism for an upcoming exhibition. (See 'Looking to the Future')

***This project is like a plant that starts small and gets big.***

Younger person

We are grateful to our many funders and supporters, who have partnered with us this year and made all this work possible. You are a key part of our Magic Me community and we look forward to our continued work together. Thank you.

**David Russell**

Chair of Trustees

**Susan Langford MBE**

Founder/Director

## Message from Susan

This Autumn, as we publish our Annual Report, Susan will be saying goodbye to Magic Me, after 36 years as our Founder and Director. She says:

*What a joy it has been! Whether filling the Hackney streets with carnival, showcasing artworks on the 205 bus for London 2012, or supporting 70+ year olds to pass their GCSE Citizenship, I have been privileged to work with amazing, funny, thoughtful and caring people of all ages and backgrounds. I am thrilled to have had such an exciting and varied working life.*

See 'Succession' to meet our new Joint CEOs



# Projects in Tower Hamlets

Tower Hamlets is our home, and we are proud of the relationships we've built with our neighbours over the decades we've worked here. Our project partners and co-creators come from the care, education, health, housing and arts sectors. We're in constant dialogue about our borough's changing needs so we can build projects together which serve the interests and issues of our developing population. To co-create *Roots & Routes* (over the page) we held initial conversations with 45 potential partners to find the 6 we're currently working with, all the while learning more about where intergenerational relationships are already strong and where *Magic Me* might work with local people to foster them further.

Though we're next to the City and Canary Wharf, Tower Hamlets is an under-resourced borough: half of children live in poverty here, and 40% of pensioners claim pension credit, making it hard for people to participate fully in social, cultural and educational life. Our projects in 2024/5 aimed to break down those barriers to participation.



## 'Her Story, Our Inspiration'

'It's important to look to the past, present and future' says one of the stars of our film *Her Story, Our Inspiration*. Made over a summer of artist-facilitated workshops and discussion, the film features students from Mulberry School for Girls and Connaught School for Girls and older women from Tower Hamlets, all sharing stories, insights and reflections of the challenges women face – and overcome – across generations.

Inspiration came from both social and personal histories. The film shows how figures from Mary Wollstonecraft to Noor Inayat Khan, Greta Thunberg to the Grunwick Strikers (plus a good spread of mothers and grandmothers) help participants find the determination required to keep advocating for women's rights across all ages.

### **PARTNERSHIPS:**

Mulberry School for Girls, Connaught School for Girls, Global Girl Leading

**ARTISTS:** Chuck Blue Lowry, Laila Sumpton, Sue Mayo, Charlene Low

**FREELANCE SPECIALISTS:** Charlie Davey, music

**FUNDERS:** Mulberry Schools Trust





**AWARD WINNER!**

*Her Story, Our Inspiration* won Best Intergenerational Project with Under 20s at the national Age Friendly Awards 2025, presented by InCommon and Clarion Futures.

We premiered the film at the international Global Girl Leading conference in October 2024 for a live and online audience of nearly 1,000 people, and it formed the focus of Magic Me's celebration of International Women's Day in March 2025.



Scan the code to watch the film or find it online at [www.magicme.co.uk/project/her-story-our-inspiration/](http://www.magicme.co.uk/project/her-story-our-inspiration/)

*I have become more confident in front of large audiences and made some new friends.* Younger participant

## Creative Mix

'Belonging' was the theme our returning Creative Mix group explored this year. Health & Social Care sixth form students from Mulberry UTC and older Tower Hamlets residents met regularly for creative workshops, experimenting with poetry, printmaking and movement. Drawing portraits with long sticks, imagining a personal island, and discussing memories and stories around food uncovered the shared interests of older and younger group members. This collaborative, communicative exchange felt particularly vital this year as Tower Hamlets took stock after the far-right riots of Summer 2024.

Participants worked towards a shared feast and a local exhibition of their work. A quote from a poem they wrote together sums up the group: 'This place is for those people who need a hug on winter days'.

**PARTNERSHIPS:** Gateway Housing Association and Mulberry UTC

**ARTISTS:** Arji Manuelpillai, Charlene Low, Ruan Murphy

**FUNDERS:** London Borough of Tower Hamlets, The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington



*I live in a block of flats with over 30 other people that don't really intermix and I feel glad to have the bounce to come here and keep lively.* Older participant



# Roots & Routes

Where are your roots? What are your routes in and out of your community? Roots & Routes is the very beginning of a new project, which comes under the umbrella of LAB. LAB will be the home for a programme of new projects which we build in response to local community conversation. Following a creative discussion with members of the community, participants made a map with artists Shabnam and Skye. It highlights the important features of our borough: its diversity and creativity, and those features will inform the project as it develops. Stay in touch to watch Roots & Routes and other LAB projects unfurl over the next few years.



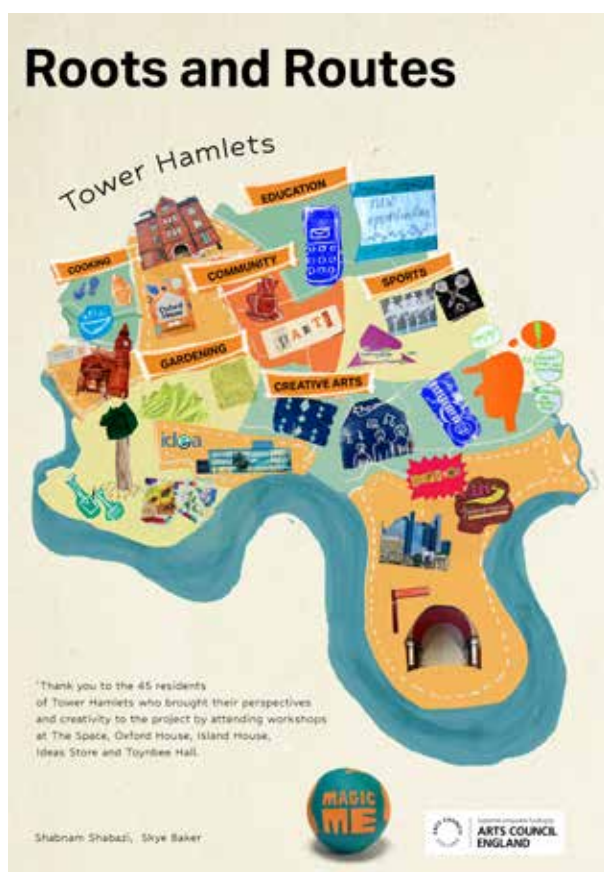
## Artworks

Our four-year Community Arts Trainee programme drew to a close this year, with our final pair of Trainees bringing the total of talented young locals we've worked with during the programme to ten. People from Black, Asian, working class or other minoritised backgrounds often face higher barriers to getting started with careers in community arts: our programme of training, mentoring and development focussed on bringing down those barriers, meaning that there are now more Tower Hamlets and Hackney residents equipped with the skills and experience to go out into their local communities and produce creative projects with confidence. Two of our trainees have subsequently worked for Magic Me as Project Co-ordinators.

*I knew I would be working with different generations and my local community but I did not expect to learn as much as I did.*

Artworks Trainee

*I am definitely more confident and career driven than I was at the beginning of the traineeship.* Artworks Trainee



**PARTNERSHIPS:** The Space Theatre, Canal Club Community Centre, Oxford House, Island House Community Centre, Watney Market Idea Store, Toynbee Hall

**ARTISTS:** Shabnam Shabazi and Skye Baker

**ARTWORKS TRAINEES:** Kimberly Johnson, Rhovie Isiko

**TRAINER:** Lewis Greener

**FUNDERS:** London Borough of Tower Hamlets and Westfield East Bank Creative Futures Fund, supported by Westfield Stratford City and Foundation for Future London

# Work in Care Homes



Creativity in care homes has been at the centre of Magic Me's work since our very earliest days. Our current programme, Spark, combines all that we have learnt from our previous projects including Artists' Residencies in Care Homes, with research partners Anglia Ruskin University. Their report, *Dare to Imagine*, focuses on how arts and care home staff can best work together to embed creativity into care homes, and informs the way we develop all our care home projects.

70% of care home residents live with a dementia, 40% with depression. Many are lonely. Care home staff face many practical and financial pressures when looking after their residents. Spark – with its emphasis on training and flexible arts activities for the non-expert – offers joy, excitement, fresh ideas, and new ways for everyone to connect and communicate. Everyday life is enriched, and relationships between staff, residents and their friends and family are strengthened.

## Spark

Established in 2021, Spark is now our flagship care home programme: a combination of staff training and artist visits to care homes to embed high quality creative activities into everyday home life. Activities focus on the sensory – light, colour, texture – suiting residents who communicate non-verbally. All the ideas, which include paper marbling, light and shadow play, cyanotypes, poetry and weaving, use inexpensive, easily available materials and equipment.

Activities can be adapted for 1-2-1 or group work, and can take place in various locations including bedrooms, communal spaces and outdoors. This year, we partnered again with Essex County Council Quality and Innovation Team and worked directly in care homes in Basildon, Brentwood, Canvey Island, Harlow and Rochford.

***Remember Bob, who you did the light activity with? He now joins us on outings which he never did before you came.*** Care home staff



**ARTISTS:** Georgia Akbar, Lily Ash Sakula

**PARTNERSHIPS:** Essex County Council Quality and Innovation Team

**FREELANCE:** Sally Knocker, Dementia Specialist and Trainer

**FUNDERS:** Essex County Council, The Rayne Foundation



***I really enjoyed it. Come back!***

Care home resident

We also offered an additional day of training to another 70 care home staff throughout Essex. A big thank you to volunteers from the Bank of England who came to the Magic Me office to help us box up the selection of art materials and resources we provide for trainees and care homes.

## Spark Book of Ideas

As Spark's impact spreads, more arts and care professionals tell us they want to learn about Spark techniques and how to employ them in their own settings. We published *Spark Book of Ideas* to reach a wide readership with a gentle introduction to the Spark programme. Written by Lily and Georgia and designed by DesignPrintBind, the 52 page, full colour guide runs through some easy, low cost activities which are adaptable for all levels of ability.

Spark was shortlisted  
for the Best Co-  
Production in the 2025  
Dementia Care Awards



If you'd like a free  
downloadable copy of the  
book, scan here or find it  
online at [www.magicme.co.uk/connection-and-creativity-in-care-homes-we-launch-a-new-spark-book/](http://www.magicme.co.uk/connection-and-creativity-in-care-homes-we-launch-a-new-spark-book/)





# Leadership & Activism

Strong principles underpin Magic Me's work. Our organisational values of Collaboration, Creativity, Thoughtfulness and Inclusivity inform our projects out in the community and in care homes, as well as our behind-the-scenes work in the office. Activities are planned so the intergenerational experience is designed, not accidental, so younger and older people are equally valued in cross-age partnerships. Our care home work is designed to be flexibly age appropriate, in the moment and reciprocal. We foster a climate conscious, pro-wellbeing culture in the office, the community, the care home and beyond.

Interest in intergenerational work is increasing. Magic Me was a pioneer in this area, and our goal is to remain a leader within the field into the future. We work constantly to refine what it's possible to achieve in intergenerational arts with trained and expert artists, committed partners and participants and a staff dedicated to inventing fresh approaches to emerging situations and dynamics. We share our expertise widely, and continue to demonstrate its full potential.

## Associate Artists

Our amazing Associate Artists co-design and facilitate our projects, and are the face of Magic Me for our many participants. As we're an intergenerational organisation, it's only right that we have intergenerational artists: some of our cohort are in their 70s, some in their 20s and lots are in between. They all bring expertise in their artforms, ranging across puppetry, writing, theatre, visual arts, filmmaking, dance and combined media, and in working with diverse community groups. We're grateful for their lively ideas and commitment to the Magic Me approach.



*As an artist working often on my own, I have benefitted incredibly from the days about safeguarding or matters like racism ... [training] has really helped me in my own practice.* Magic Me Associate Artist

## Artists & Practice

Artists & Practice is our programme of quarterly Learning and Development days for our Associate Artists to share creative skills and experience. This year, as well as learning practical art-form skills such as puppetry and model making skills, our Artists were supported to share and develop expertise in Magic Me's anti-racist, anti-ageist, pro-safeguarding practice.

***Thank you for providing these L&D days. They are a privilege to be a part of. Magic Me has such respect for their artists and invests time and resources that help increase self-confidence and contribute to a sense of community with the artists themselves. The L&D days reflect this respect and seems such a unique programme within the field of arts participation. And no small thing, offering a fee to attend these sessions is also a sign of respect for the artists' time and contributes to a sense of being valued. Thank you!***

Magic Me Associate Artist

**ASSOCIATE ARTISTS:** Amanda Mascarenhas, Amy Leung, Arji Manuelpillai, Carolene Yawa Ada, Charlene Low, Chuck Blue Lowry, Georgia Akbar, Laila Sumpton, Liane Harris, Lily Ash Sakula, Polly Beestone, Ruan Murphy, Shabnam Shabazi, Skye Baker, Sue Mayo

**FUNDERS:** Arts Council England



## Sharing the Learning

As our society continues to age and change, Magic Me remains pioneering – inventing fresh approaches to emerging situations and dynamics. With interest in intergenerational work increasing, we remain a leader in the sector, and are glad to share our expertise with others. This year, we contributed to British Future's report *Creating Connections: the role of the arts in bridging divides and bringing communities together*, we presented at a Meet-Up for Mercers' Company grantees, and we engaged guests at a Rayne Foundation event with treat-sized, colourful, light-filled Spark activities.

In May 2024, our Director Susan and Project Manager Audrey enjoyed a visit to a Buckingham Palace Garden Party, and in October we attended a reception at the Houses of Parliament to honour the Global Girl Leading project.





# The year in numbers

**18**

organisational partners

**6**

local authorities

**15**

artists

**2**

trainees

**1,388**

live and online audience members

**4**

volunteers

**4,764**

online community

**116**

care home staff

**500+**

care home residents

**234**

participants

**13**

teachers & community organisers

# Our Impact

## Who does our charity help?

**Magic Me supports the younger and older people of Tower Hamlets through our community programmes, and also the residents and staff of care homes where Spark and other projects take place. Tower Hamlets is an under-resourced borough. We know that poverty and low income are barriers to taking part in the arts, so all our activities are free to participants.**



## Creative Mix participant feedback from 24/25

**Impact for older and younger people at the end of the project**

**92%** reported improved connections from taking part in the project

**87%** reported it helped them feel part of the community

**94%** reported feeling motivated to do more creative things in the future

## The problems we solve

We all believe in making art just for the love of it: our Associate Artists all have their own projects outside of Magic Me, and many of our office staff create art, music, poetry and dance in their spare time. But we also know that making art together brings additional social impact. We work with funders and partners who want to improve individuals' wellbeing, their employment potential and confidence. Our projects build community cohesion and boost pride in the places where people live. Growing evidence suggests that participation in community arts can improve mental health and mitigate the diseases of isolation – so we're also exploring what our work does in the field of creative health.

## The change we make

We create the space where people make positive change happen. Our community arts projects encourage the interactions that build understanding and empathy. They:

- increase participants' confidence and sense of wellbeing
- challenge negative perceptions of ageing and misconceptions about their partner age group
- combat loneliness and build community cohesion both across generations and within age cohorts
- use artistic creation to encourage relationship building and a positive focus beyond the self
- encourage intergenerational participant groups to face the common task of creating work for audiences
- foster participants' development of new methods of communication to face that task together
- bring joy





## Spark findings from 24/25

	Agree	Strongly Agree
Staff experienced an increase in meaningful connections between residents and staff.	16%	84%
Staff gained new ideas, activities and ways of bringing more creativity into care homes.	-	100%
Staff built their confidence in being creative with residents.	34%	66%

## Staff also reported –

Residents experienced an increased sense of connection with staff, other residents or their home	65%	35%
Residents felt their individual needs, interests and strengths were recognised and valued.	50%	50%



## Our projects in care homes build

- better communication between staff, residents, friends and families
- new, lasting friendships between residents
- new approaches to providing more personalised care
- tangible improvements in residents' moods and wellbeing
- increased social engagement
- improved physical dexterity
- staff confidence to devise and deliver creative activities long-term



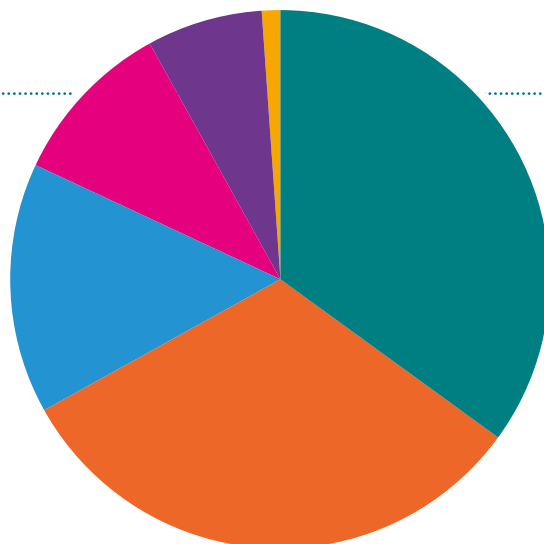
# Our Finances

This summary is taken from Magic Me's full, independently examined accounts. If you would like a copy, please visit [www.magicme.co.uk](http://www.magicme.co.uk) or contact Magic Me on [info@magicme.co.uk](mailto:info@magicme.co.uk) or 020 3222 6064.

Income during the year 2024/25 was £445,797. As you can see from the pie charts, the majority of our expenditure of £428,921 is on people – the staff and freelance artists who make our programmes possible.

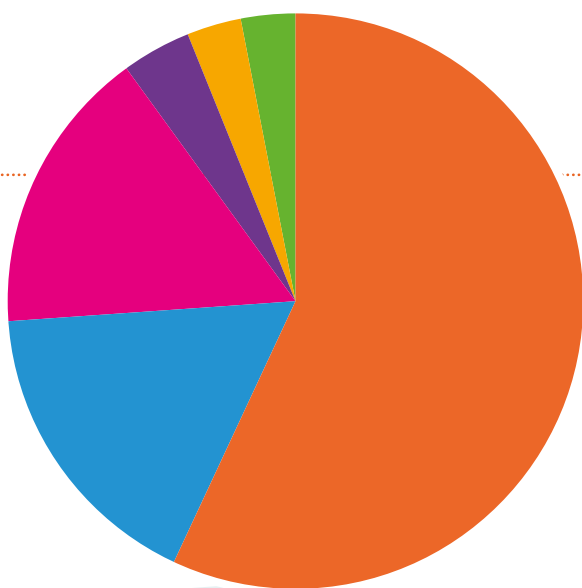
## Income 2024/25

- Arts Council England, National Portfolio Organisation 35%
- Trusts & Foundations 32%
- Local Authorities 15%
- Livery Companies 10%
- Individual donations 7%
- Other 1%



## Expenditure 2024/25

- Staff costs 57%
- Artists fees, materials & project costs 17%
- Fundraising 16%
- Administrative expenses 4%
- Rent, office and communications 3%
- Governance including accountancy 3%





# Thank you



Thank you to the many trusts, foundations and funders whose support enabled our work this year.

## Grants & donations in 2024/25



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

**CHAPMAN  
CHARITABLE  
TRUST**



**The  
CHARLES S FRENCH  
CHARITABLE  
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**The  
Childhood Trust**  
*Alleviating the impact of child poverty*



**Essex County Council**

**Excelcare**  
*Belong with us*

**F  
FOUNDATION  
FOR FUTURE  
LONDON**



**W  
Garfield Weston  
FOUNDATION**



**THE  
MERCERS'  
COMPANY**  
Trusted by The Charity of St Richard Whittington

**phf Paul Hamlyn  
Foundation**

**POSTCODE  
SOCIETY  
TRUST**

**The Rayne  
Foundation**

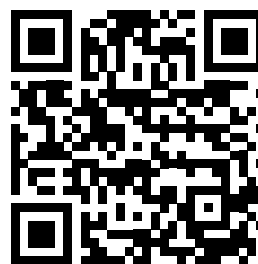
**the  
Tudor trust**

**Woodroffe Benton  
FOUNDATION**

## Thank you to our individual donors and Big Give supporters

A huge thank you to all those individuals who support us with one off and regular donations throughout the year – both those friends we know and those who prefer to remain anonymous. You also helped make this year's Big Give Christmas Campaign a huge success. Our pledgers and champion funder The Childhood Trust joined forces with individual donors to raise a whopping £35,722. Thank you to all of you: that's a lot of people whose lives you've improved through creativity this year.

Scan below to add your support or visit at <https://magicme.raisely.com/>



And

**French Huguenot Church of London  
Charitable Trust  
Mulberry School for Girls**

## Thank you for in-kind support

34SP for website hosting  
A&O Shearman, for printing our resource books and Annual Reports

# The People Who Made it Happen

## Associate Artists

Amanda Mascarenhas  
Amy Leung  
Arji Manuelpillai  
Carolene Yawa Ada  
Charlene Low  
Chuck Blue Lowry  
Georgia Akbar  
Laila Sumpton  
Liane Harris  
Lily Ash Sakula  
Polly Beestone  
Shabnam Shabazi  
Ruan Murphy  
Skye Baker  
Sue Mayo

## Current Staff – Summer 2025

Audrey Aidoo-Davies, Project Manager  
Ben Butcher, Head of Operations  
Julia Bird, Fundraising & Development Manager  
Kate Hodson, Programme Director  
Kimberly Johnson, Project Coordinator  
Natalie Golding, Development Coordinator  
Priyanka Chauhan, Project Manager  
Susan Langford MBE, Founder / Director

## Former staff during 2024/25

Chloe Latchford, Project Coordinator

## Freelancer staff

Emma Mulligan, Accounts

## Trainees during 2024/25

Kimberly Johnson  
Rhovie Isiko



## Trustees during 2024/25

Alicia Tan  
David Russell, Chair  
Dominique Moore  
Emily Andrews  
Hugh Blacklock, Treasurer  
Imogen Davies  
Jimena Meza Mitcher  
Louisa Joseph  
Miriam King  
Rebecca Goh  
Thomas Nowacki  
Yaa Adansi-Pipim

## Trustees who stood down during the year

Harriet Cheng

## Thank you to

Our good neighbours: Praxis, and our landlords at Bethnal Green Meeting House, Pott Street  
D.R. ink  
The Bank of England  
Creative Mix Volunteers Chinny Yeung and Gianni Luca Pisano

## Photo credits

Creative Mix: Mark Wilkinson  
It's on the Cards: Hayley Madden, Kyle Madden  
All other photos: Magic Me staff and Associate Artists

**WE  
REMEMBER ...**

Alma Ramnauth  
Vi Davis

... Magic Me participants who have sadly passed away over the last year.



# Looking to the Future



**We're setting out for 2026 with a spring in our step, with exciting plans to continue exploring the intergenerational, anti-ageing and creative health possibilities in Tower Hamlets, East London and Essex. The year begins with a number of projects which are already underway –**

**It's on the Cards:** we're in the first stages of an intergenerational project with a Brick Lane primary school and older Tower Hamlets residents in collaboration with the Wellcome Trust. Discussion and creation sessions will culminate in an artwork to be exhibited at the Wellcome Collection in central London in 2026.



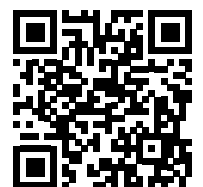
**Her Voice Matters:** we return to our partnership with Mulberry Schools Trust to create another women's filmmaking project. A brand new cohort of older and younger participants will delve into the local archives to research some of our home-grown heroines and see where the journey takes them.

**Creative Mix:** our sessions will continue at Pott Street. If you see us out and about in Tower Hamlets with our 'tea trolley' of arts activities, come and say hello – we'll be busy encouraging new participants from local sheltered housing complexes to come and join the group.

**Spark:** we're back in a new group of six care homes in West Essex, training care home staff in the creative and sensory techniques which inspire residents to improve connection and communication. We're also piloting additional schemes to involve residents' friends and family in activities.

**LAB:** there are more community based consultation projects to come, including a collaboration between primary schools and a community centre in the Isle of Dogs, plus a ground-breaking LGBTQ+ intergenerational project.

Scan to sign up to our newsletter or online at <https://magicme.co.uk/newsletter-sign-up/>, or follow us on social media and you'll be the first to know about all our forthcoming plans. If you work for a cultural, care or health organisations and you'd like to talk to us about a partner project, drop us a line at [info@magicme.co.uk](mailto:info@magicme.co.uk)





# Succession

**After 36 years leading Magic Me, our Founder Susan Langford steps down as Director in October 2025.**

Susan's pioneering work with cohorts of staff and artists over the years has reached thousands of participants, from primary school pupils to centenarians. Lives have been changed, relationships deepened and communities brought together through creative arts projects developed under her leadership. As the many benefits of intergenerational practice have been increasingly recognised, Magic Me's expertise has been sought after. Over the years Susan has shared our approach with colleagues and communities across the UK and in Korea, Brazil, Ireland, Poland and Spain.

Our Chair of Trustees, David Russell, says

***'On behalf of the current and past Trustees of Magic Me, I'd like to say a huge thank you to Susan for her imaginative leadership and tireless stewardship of the organisation over the last three and a half decades. Political, financial and public health contexts have changed hugely over the years, but through it all, her unwavering belief in the creative imaginations of people of all ages and abilities has enabled an astonishing body of work to flourish. She leaves Magic Me in a robust condition, ready to take on a new generation of challenges and opportunities.'***

Susan is passing the Magic Me baton to two new Joint CEOs: Kate Hodson, former Programme Director and Ben Butcher, former Head of Operations. They bring much experience and expertise from both within and outside Magic Me, and were appointed after a robust restructuring and recruitment process.

Susan's impact on Magic Me and its beneficiaries has been astonishing: we all salute her vocation and her dedication.









## At this table

*Life begins to take shape at this table.*

*Dominoes, cards, slamming chips at this table.*

*Opening our laptops, discussing bills at this table*

*We eat, we drink, we make new friends at this table.*

*Laughter and happiness fill the room round this table.*

*We argue, we rage, we throw things at each other*

*But at the end of the day, it's love around this table.*

*It's a place to discuss and connect and smile together.*

*A place to feel safe, to make lasting peace for the future.*

*We reminisce of our parents, our old friends at this table.*

*We follow the journey, we share the tastes and music  
our oldest memories, stories moving through generations.*

*On this table, we consider performing, sharing ourselves*

*We smile and laugh and talk about our future, our potential.*

*We gather we eat and we pray, our laughter will always stay*

*Because this table is for all of us, it's a boat to bring us together.*

*And listen now, at this table a silent story awaits to be told.*

*This poem and artwork were made by the participants  
of Creative Mix*

Find us on

 magicmearts

 magic-me

 @MagicMeArts



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



Funded by  
**UK Government**

Thank you to A&O Shearman for printing this report.

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Tel: 020 3222 6064

[info@magicme.co.uk](mailto:info@magicme.co.uk)

[www.magicme.co.uk](http://www.magicme.co.uk)

Registered Charity No. 328331



Company no. 02394189  
Charity no. 328331

**Magic Me**  
**Report and Unaudited Financial**  
**Statements**  
**31 March 2025**

## Magic Me

### Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 31 March 2025

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<b>Company number</b>	02394189	
<b>Charity number</b>	328331	
<b>Registered office and operational address</b>	26 Pott Street London E2 0EF	
<b>Trustees</b>	Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:	
	Yaa Adansi-Pipim	
	Emily Andrews	appointed 28 March 2025
	Hugh Blacklock	
	Harriet Cheng	resigned 15 October 2024
	Imogen Davies	appointed 11 April 2025
	Rebecca Goh	appointed 19 March 2025
	Louisa Joseph	
	Miriam King	appointed 19 March 2025
	Jimena Meza Mitcher	
	Dominique Moore	
	Thomas Nowacki	
	David Russell	
	Alicia Tan	appointed 15 October 2024
<b>Company secretary</b>	Ben Butcher	appointed 17 June 2024
	Susan Langford	
<b>Bankers</b>	CAF Bank Ltd	Flagstone
	25 Kings Hill Avenue	1st Floor
	Kings Hill	Clareville House
	West Malling	26-27 Oxenden Street
	Kent	London
	ME19 4JQ	SW1Y 4EL
<b>Independent examiners</b>	Godfrey Wilson Limited Chartered accountants and statutory auditors 5th Floor Mariner House 62 Prince Street Bristol BS1 4QD	



## Magic Me

### Report of the trustees

#### For the year ended 31 March 2025

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The Trustees present their report along with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities (effective from January 2019).

#### Objectives and activities

The charity's objectives are: the improvement and advancement of the education of children and adults towards a better understanding of ageing and the needs of elderly people, and methods by which those needs may best be met.

Magic Me's vision is *"A world without ageism, where everyone can enjoy their unique creativity and full potential"*. We believe everyone has a past, present, future and an imagination — a wealth of stories, ideas and dreams to inspire art making.

Our mission is *"To inspire change - for individuals, communities and systems - through extraordinary art, sparking magic between generations"*.

Magic Me works for the benefit of the public both now and for future generations. Statisticians predict that perhaps 1 in 4 children born this year in the UK will live to be 99, though many will experience poor health in later life.

For more than 35 years we have pioneered intergenerational arts practice, encouraging dialogue between generations and across cultures. In east London and Essex our artists have partnered with care homes and schools to create powerful artworks and performances which challenge how society thinks about ageing.

By bringing younger and older people together in shared creative activities, we bring enjoyment, improved wellbeing and greater mutual understanding across generations, today. Longer term we support individuals and organisations to imagine different ways of growing older, and to design the future society we need to build for our ageing and increasingly diverse population.

Our current three year Strategy and Programme has three objectives and strands of work:

- **Depth & Inclusion:** widening access to the arts and community building in Tower Hamlets, combatting social isolation and loneliness, through intergenerational arts programmes;
- **Increasing Reach:** improving the quality of life for older people living in care homes in London, Essex and beyond. This second strand draws on Magic Me's specialist knowledge of bringing the arts into care homes and connecting meaningfully with residents, particularly those living with dementia; and
- **Leadership & Activism:** as pioneers and leaders, sharing our experience and expertise, harnessing the power of the arts and the power of intergenerational activism. We fight ageism and bring positive lasting change — for individuals, communities and systems.

Our activities, exhibitions and performances challenge both participants and audiences to reconsider ageist expectations and stereotypes, which can limit the aspirations and lives of younger and older people. All our projects are designed and facilitated by our skilled, professional Associate Artists, working across the performing, visual, literary, media, combined and other artforms.

## **Magic Me**

### **Report of the trustees**

#### **For the year ended 31 March 2025**

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The Trustees have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future actions.

#### **Who used and benefitted from our activities?**

Magic Me benefits people of all ages at many different levels, increasing individual and community wellbeing. Young and older participants enjoy new opportunities, learn and grow skills and form new friendships. Our partners - for example care home staff and teachers - gain new insights and skills, and form deeper and more rewarding relationships with those with whom they work. Artists and creative practitioners develop new skills and expertise in working with communities; our volunteers gain skills and confidence in communicating with older and younger people. Whatever their age and role, individuals form wider connections and social links within their communities, finding new ways to contribute and a fresh understanding of their neighbours.

Magic Me is based in Tower Hamlets, East London, however the activity we deliver and our influence on other people benefits people and communities much more widely.

During the year 2024/25:

- we worked with 18 cultural and social partner organisations, 6 local authorities in London and Essex, 4 volunteers, 4 trainees and 15 artists;
- we directly benefited more than 500 care home residents, 234 community participants, 80 care home staff and 13 teachers and community organisers, through the workshops, projects, events and training sessions we delivered; and
- we welcomed 1,388 live and online audience members to our film screenings and our online community enjoying our films and online content grew to 4,764.

#### **Overview of the year**

Through 2024/25 the communities we serve and work within continued to be affected by the cost of living crisis. Cuts to public services had an impact on individuals and partner organisations day to day, but also led to increased competition for us for alternative sources of organisational funding from hard-pressed trusts and foundations. Although we increased our public profile this year through a heightened communications plan, fundraising was a hard task.

To take account of fundraising vagaries, we keep our projects flexible and modular so we can expand, contract, postpone or bring forward plans depending on available funding. Our projects continue to prioritise the 1 in 2 children and 1 in 3 older people in Tower Hamlets who live in poverty, impacting their physical and mental health, confidence and ability to participate in education, cultural and community life.

2024/25 saw us deliver the second of three years of activity funded by our inclusion in Arts Council England's National Portfolio of Organisations. This core financial support - together with other practical support, connections and resources - enables us to plan ahead with confidence, to develop and deliver a growing programme of high quality arts opportunities within communities in east London and Essex and invest in our organisation — its people, practice and systems. Following the pandemic, we have recalibrated our projects, refining existing ones and piloting new ones, building on our connections and relationships.

## **Magic Me**

### **Report of the trustees**

#### **For the year ended 31 March 2025**

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Key projects and highlights included:

##### **Depth & Inclusion**

'Her Story / Our Inspiration': a filmmaking project where older women from Tower Hamlets collaborated with students from two local girls schools to create a film celebrating local, personal and historical women. The film was screened at the international Global Girl Leading conference in central London, formed the focus of our International Women's Day celebrations and in 2025/26 went on to win the InCommon Age Friendly Award for Best Intergenerational Project with Under 20s.

Creative Mix: the continuation of a three and a half year project, which brings generations together through creative activities and celebratory events. Participants were Health & Social Care students from a local UTC and older residents from sheltered housing complexes and other community settings. Social isolation is combatted, increasing individuals' confidence and wellbeing whilst building connections across different faiths, cultures and backgrounds.

Roots & Routes: the beginning of our new LAB programme, which is a place-based arts project with community partners across Tower Hamlets. Older and younger people came together with artists to map intergenerational relationships locally, increasing their connection with each other and their pride in the place they live. Routes and Roots took place across six partner venues in the borough. Future LAB projects will follow.

Artworks: the last phase of a four year project to provide work placements supported young Tower Hamlets and Hackney residents to pursue careers in the arts. We focused on those who currently face barriers e.g. Black, Asian and other racially minoritised people, and those from working-class backgrounds. We worked with two trainees this year, and we have subsequently been able to offer one permanent and two freelance roles to participants.

##### **Increased Reach**

Spark: our continuing programme of sensory arts activities for older people living in care homes. Spark is delivered by Magic Me artists working in partnership with care home staff through training opportunities, resources and visits, in person and remotely, supporting everyone's right to creative expression. This year's sessions took place across Essex. We also worked on a publication featuring Spark techniques and ideas, available in hard copy and digital versions.

Spark and other care home initiatives continue to be informed by the Artists' Residencies in Care Homes project which completed delivery last year.

##### **Leadership & Activism**

We believe in and continue to promote the power of intergenerational work and the arts as tools for challenging ageism and the status quo.

Artists & Practice: a programme of quarterly learning and development days for our diverse cohort of fifteen Associate Artists to share creative skills and experience. This year, as well as learning practical puppetry and model making skills, our Artists were supported to develop expertise in Magic Me's anti-racist, anti-ageist, pro-safeguarding practice.

Staff Wellbeing: as part of a concerted plan to foster staff wellbeing, we used a specific fund provided by the Tudor Trust to underpin an additional week of shared staff leave after the August Bank Holiday.



## **Magic Me**

### **Report of the trustees**

#### **For the year ended 31 March 2025**

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##### **Sharing the Learning**

Sharing the Learning: as our society continues to age and change, Magic Me remains pioneering, inventing fresh approaches to emerging situations and dynamics. With interest in intergenerational work increasing, we remain a leader in this field, sharing our expertise with others. In 2024/25 this included: contributing to British Future's report on Creating Connections: the role of the arts in bridging divides and bringing communities together; presenting at a Meet-Up for Mercers' Charity grantees and engaging guests of a Rayne Foundation event in colourful, light-filled Spark activities.

##### **Looking ahead**

We are looking forward to continuing to explore the creative intergenerational possibilities in Tower Hamlets, East London and Essex over the coming year, and have a number of projects underway.

It's on the Cards: the first stages of an intergenerational project with a Brick Lane primary school and older Tower Hamlets residents in collaboration with the Wellcome Trust. Discussion and creation sessions will culminate in an artwork to be exhibited at the Wellcome Collection in central London in 2026.

Her Voice Matters': another women's filmmaking project with a new cohort of older and younger participants.

Creative Mix: continuing sessions at Pott Street, with additional community based cultivation in local sheltered housing complexes.

Spark: continuing Spark programmes, with additional pilots to involve residents friends and family in activities.

LAB: more community based consultation projects including a collaboration between primary schools and a community centre in the Isle of Dogs, and a ground-breaking LGBTQ+ intergenerational project.

##### **Succession Plans**

Susan Langford, Magic Me's Founder Director since 1989, announced her plan to retire during 2024/25, and will step down in November 2025. After a robust recruitment process managed by the Board and Achatas recruitment consultants, two new joint CEOs were appointed: Ben Butcher (MM Head of Operations at time of writing) and Kate Hodson (current MM Programme Director). They bring a wealth of experience from their time at Magic Me and previous roles, and will deliver a smooth and continuous transition the better to serve our beneficiaries.

More details of our activities and their impact are given within our Annual Report 2024/25.

This will be available on-line at [www.magicme.co.uk](http://www.magicme.co.uk) following our AGM in October 2025 and in printed format on request from our office via [info@magicme.co.uk](mailto:info@magicme.co.uk) or 020 3222 6064.

##### **Financial review**

The financial transactions of the charity during the year and the position at the end of the year are set out in the attached accounts.

Income during the year 2024/25 was £445,797 compared with £435,978 in 2023/24. Total expenditure was also up, to £428,921 compared with £413,798 in the previous year. This resulted in a surplus of £16,876 for the year.

## **Magic Me**

### **Report of the trustees**

#### **For the year ended 31 March 2025**

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We are incredibly grateful to our funders and supporters who have enabled us to grow and increase our reach and impact in recent years. Their partnership and flexibility has facilitated the deepening of our community focused practice and the development and innovation of our offerings.

Magic Me is enormously grateful for the very generous support received from numerous trusts and foundations, livery companies, lotteries, businesses and individual supporters – without which our work would not be possible. 2024/25 was our second year as an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation; this substantial annual unrestricted grant of £157,994 which we anticipate will be extended by a further year to March 2027 has allowed the organisation to put in place robust fundraising and financial foundations to support us to thrive this year and into the future.

Income in 2024/25 included: first of 3 installments of a new grant totalling £79,911 over 2.5 years from The Rayne Foundation; the third instalment of a £150,000 grant over four years from the Tudor Trust and the final instalment of three from Foundation for Future London Creative Futures Fund.

One-off grants came from: Garfield Weston Foundation, Chapman Trust, The Woodroffe Benton Foundation and Fowler, Smith & Jones Trust. Two Local Authority grants from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and Essex County Council supported projects in their areas. We were also commissioned by Mulberry Schools Trust for a film project as part of their Global Girl Leading initiative.

Regular and one-off donations from generous individuals totalled £45,136 including contributions to our Big Give Christmas Challenge 2024 appeal, £8,000 of which was generously match funded by Childhood Trust, and Gift Aid. Careful financial management enabled us to earn £4,579 in bank interest.

Further details of grants and donations are given in the Notes below.

#### **Reserves policy and position**

As is standard, the accounts have been prepared using the going concern approach, which is appropriate as there are no plans to cease Magic Me's operations or liquidate the charity. At 31 March 2025 the balance sheet showed £160,838 cash at the bank and total net assets of £180,124, which included £142,187 of unrestricted general funds and £37,937 of restricted funds for ongoing projects.

Recognising the increasingly challenging fundraising climate and building on 2023/24's financial successes, we set another surplus budget target and through investing in our fundraising team and continued prudent fiscal management, delivered on this ambition in 2024/25 resulting in an increase of unrestricted reserves from £124,898 to £142,187.

The trustees aim to keep a balance in reserves equal to at least three months' core and project expenditure which is now equal to £123,665. This to enable the charity to continue to operate in the short term in the event of unexpected delays in the receipt of income or unexpected expenditure and to enable a well-managed wind-up of the charity should that ever become necessary. We recognise that this target will change depending on various circumstances, growing with inflation and a growth in our programme activity and associated expenditure and potentially reducing with changes in staff. The reserve level is reviewed quarterly by the Finance, Audit and Risk sub-Committee and the overall reserves policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

## **Magic Me**

### **Report of the trustees**

#### **For the year ended 31 March 2025**

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Inflation has risen in recent months and prices remain high, with continued national and international economic difficulties and uncertainties. Fundraising remains challenging with increasing community need and higher than ever competition for grants and donations. Magic Me has successfully managed cyclical annual fundraising for many years and we will continue to do so. The fact that our activities address pressing needs within our communities gives us confidence that funders and donors will continue to invest in our work and organisation.

The senior leadership team continue our regular practice, honed during Covid-19, of actively (i) modelling potential fundraising scenarios and (ii) managing cashflow, including reviewing discretionary costs and avoiding unnecessary liabilities. In order to retain a level of reserves consistent with honouring current liabilities, including to our staff and freelance artists, we continue to plan projects in such a way as to be able to pause or reschedule activity and thus reduce costs, should further grants not be secured.

#### **Statement of responsibilities of the trustees**

The trustees (who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.



**Magic Me**

**Report of the trustees**

**For the year ended 31 March 2025**

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**Independent examiners**

Godfrey Wilson Limited were re-appointed as independent examiners to the charitable company during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on 15 September 2025 and signed on their behalf by

*David Russell*

David Russell - Trustee

## **Independent examiner's report**

### **To the trustees of**

#### **Magic Me**

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I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Magic Me (the charitable company) for the year ended 31 March 2025, which are set out on pages 11 to 24.

#### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the trustees of the charitable company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the charitable company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charitable company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

#### **Independent examiner's statement**

Since the charitable company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), which is one of the listed bodies.

Godfrey Wilson Limited also provides bookkeeping services to the charitable company. I confirm that as a member of the ICAEW I am subject to the FRC's Revised Ethical Standard 2016, which I have applied with respect to this engagement.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- (1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the charitable company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
- (2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- (3) the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act 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; or
- (4) the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

**Independent examiner's report**

**To the trustees of**

**Magic Me**

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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.

*Dougal Howard*

Date: 15 September 2025

**Dougal Howard ACA**

**Member of the ICAEW**

For and on behalf of:

**Godfrey Wilson Limited**

Chartered accountants and statutory auditors

5th Floor Mariner House

62 Prince Street

Bristol

BS1 4QD



**Magic Me****Statement of financial activities** *(incorporating an income and expenditure account)***For the year ended 31 March 2025**

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2025 Total £	Restated 2024 Total £
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations	3/5	-	312,508	<b>312,508</b>	232,847
Charitable activities	4	126,560	-	<b>126,560</b>	197,959
Other trading activities		-	-	-	12
Investments		-	4,579	<b>4,579</b>	4,610
Other		-	2,150	<b>2,150</b>	550
<b>Total income</b>		<u>126,560</u>	<u>319,237</u>	<u><b>445,797</b></u>	<u>435,978</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds		-	98,511	<b>98,511</b>	76,261
Charitable activities		<u>126,973</u>	<u>203,437</u>	<u><b>330,410</b></u>	<u>337,537</u>
<b>Total expenditure</b>	6	<u>126,973</u>	<u>301,948</u>	<u><b>428,921</b></u>	<u>413,798</u>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) and net movement in funds</b>	7	<u>(413)</u>	<u>17,289</u>	<u><b>16,876</b></u>	<u>22,180</u>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward		<u>38,350</u>	<u>124,898</u>	<u><b>163,248</b></u>	<u>141,068</u>
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<u><u>37,937</u></u>	<u><u>142,187</u></u>	<u><u><b>180,124</b></u></u>	<u><u>163,248</u></u>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in note 14 to the accounts.

Prior year expenditure has been reclassified to reflect the change in accounting policy on reallocating support costs as detailed in note 1h. This is purely a reclassification of expenditure between headings and does not impact total expenditure.

## Magic Me

### Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2025

	Note	£	2025 £	2024 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>				
Tangible assets	10		<u>1,635</u>	<u>2,528</u>
			<b>1,635</b>	2,528
<b>Current assets</b>				
Debtors	11	<b>38,005</b>		7,499
Cash at bank and in hand		<u><b>160,838</b></u>		<u>183,223</u>
		<b>198,843</b>		190,722
<b>Liabilities</b>				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	12	<u><b>(20,354)</b></u>		<u>(30,002)</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>			<u><b>178,489</b></u>	<u>160,720</u>
<b>Net assets</b>	13		<u><u><b>180,124</b></u></u>	<u><u>163,248</u></u>
<b>Funds</b>	14			
Restricted funds			<b>37,937</b>	38,350
Unrestricted funds				
General funds			<u><b>142,187</b></u>	<u>124,898</u>
<b>Total charity funds</b>			<u><u><b>180,124</b></u></u>	<u><u>163,248</u></u>

The directors are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act) relating to the audit of the financial statements for the year by virtue of section 477, and that no member or members have requested an audit pursuant to section 476 of the Act.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- (i) ensuring that the Company keeps proper accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act; and
- (ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the trustees on 15 September 2025 and signed on their behalf by

*David Russell*

David Russell - Trustee

## **Magic Me**

### **Notes to the financial statements**

#### **For the year ended 31 March 2025**

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#### **1. Accounting policies**

##### **a) General information and basis of preparation**

Magic Me is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales. The registered office address is 26 Pott Street, London, E2 0EF.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities in preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Magic Me meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note.

##### **b) Going concern basis of accounting**

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern, which the trustees consider appropriate having regard to the current level of unrestricted reserves. There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

##### **c) Income**

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from the government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

##### **d) Donated services and facilities**

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item, is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

##### **e) Interest receivable**

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity: this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

**Notes to the financial statements**

**For the year ended 31 March 2025**

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**1. Accounting policies (continued)**

**f) Funds accounting**

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

**g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT**

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

**h) Allocation of support and governance costs**

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity, including the costs of complying with constitutional and statutory requirements and any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities based on total expenditure as follows:

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
Raising funds	<b>17.4%</b>	13.7%
Charitable activities	<b>82.6%</b>	86.3%

**i) Tangible fixed assets**

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

Fixtures, fittings and equipment	4 years
IT equipment and website	3 years

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £500.

**j) Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

**k) Cash at bank and in hand**

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

**l) Creditors**

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.



**Notes to the financial statements**

**For the year ended 31 March 2025**

**1. Accounting policies (continued)**

**m) Pension costs**

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme for its employees. There are no further liabilities other than that already recognised in the SOFA.

**n) Accounting estimates and key judgements**

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are depreciation as described in note (i) above.

**2. Prior period comparatives: statement of financial activities (restated)**

	Restricted	Unrestricted	2024 Total
	£	£	£
<b>Income from:</b>			
Donations	5,784	227,063	232,847
Charitable activities	197,959	-	197,959
Other trading activities	-	12	12
Investments	-	4,610	4,610
Other	-	550	550
<b>Total income</b>	<b>203,743</b>	<b>232,235</b>	<b>435,978</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>			
Raising funds	-	76,261	76,261
Charitable activities	211,316	126,221	337,537
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>211,316</b>	<b>202,482</b>	<b>413,798</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) and net movement in funds</b>	<b>(7,573)</b>	<b>29,753</b>	<b>22,180</b>

## Magic Me

### Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

#### 3. Income from donations

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2025 Total £
Grants and donations > £1,000			
Arts Council England	-	157,994	157,994
Tudor Trust	-	37,500	37,500
Mulberry School for Girls	-	29,808	29,808
The Rayne Foundation	-	20,070	20,070
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	20,000	20,000
Chapman Trust	-	2,000	2,000
Grants and donations < £1,000, individual donations*	-	36,385	36,385
Gift aid	-	8,751	8,751
<b>Total income from donations</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>312,508</b>	<b>312,508</b>

Arts Council England: This is a three year programme, with an invitation to extend for an additional year, supporting the full breadth of Magic Me's creative arts activities. In 2024/25 this grant directly funded project work including Artists Residencies, Creative Mix, and Spark (formerly Magic Moments).

\*Included in this line are gifts in kind of £1,553 (2024: £3,070) representing printing of the charity's annual report, hire of a meeting room for an away day and a donation of unused materials and fabric.

#### Prior period comparative:

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £
Grants and donations > £1,000			
Arts Council England	-	157,994	157,994
Tudor Trust	-	37,500	37,500
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	15,000	15,000
The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington	-	4,000	4,000
Grants and donations < £1,000, individual donations	5,784	11,274	17,058
Gift aid	-	1,295	1,295
<b>Total income from donations</b>	<b>5,784</b>	<b>227,063</b>	<b>232,847</b>

## Magic Me

### Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

#### 4. Income from charitable activities

	2025 Total £
Grants > £,1000	
London Borough of Tower Hamlets	39,958
The Rayne Foundation	29,211
Essex County Council	25,000
Foundation for Future London	8,971
The Childhood Trust	8,000
The Childwick Trust	7,000
Charles S French Charitable Trust	4,420
Fowler Smith & Jones Trust	2,000
Woodroffe Benton	2,000
<b>Total income from charitable activities</b>	<b>126,560</b>

#### Prior year comparative:

	2024 Total £
Grants > £,1000	
Mercers' Company	50,000
London Borough of Tower Hamlets	32,747
Essex County Council	30,000
The Rayne Foundation	20,000
Foundation for Future London	17,942
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	16,500
Players of the People's Postcode Lottery	15,270
The Childwick Trust	7,500
French Huguenot Church of London Charitable Trust	6,000
Excelcare	2,000
<b>Total income from charitable activities</b>	<b>197,959</b>

All income from charitable activities in the current and prior year was restricted.

#### 5. Government grants

The charitable company receives government grants, defined as funding from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Essex County Council and Arts Council England to fund charitable activities. The total value of such grants in the period ending 31 March 2025 was £222,952 (2024: £220,741). There are no unfulfilled conditions or contingencies attaching to these grants in 2024/25.

## Magic Me

### Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

#### 6. Total expenditure

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance costs £	2025 Total £
Staff costs (note 8)	73,927	142,164	94,554	310,645
Artists' fees, materials and other direct project costs	-	67,414	-	67,414
Premises and insurance costs	-	-	19,000	19,000
Administrative expenses	-	-	13,011	13,011
Accountancy expenses	-	-	8,300	8,300
Other staff costs	-	7,255	-	7,255
Depreciation	-	-	1,282	1,282
Annual report and AGM	-	-	1,080	1,080
Fundraising expenses	671	-	-	671
Trustees meetings and expenses	-	-	263	263
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>74,598</b>	<b>216,833</b>	<b>137,490</b>	<b>428,921</b>
Allocation of support and governance costs	23,913	113,577	(137,490)	-
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>98,511</b>	<b>330,410</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>428,921</b>

Total governance costs were £4,402 (2024: £4,476).

#### Prior period comparative (restated)

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance costs £	2024 Total £
Staff costs (note 8)	47,877	136,118	89,085	273,080
Artists' fees, materials and other direct project costs	-	63,637	-	63,637
Administrative expenses	-	-	25,460	25,460
Premises and insurance costs	-	-	17,460	17,460
Other staff costs	-	13,424	-	13,424
Fundraising expenses	8,642	-	-	8,642
Accountancy expenses	-	-	8,336	8,336
Depreciation	-	-	2,163	2,163
Annual report and AGM	-	-	1,586	1,586
Trustees meetings and expenses	-	-	10	10
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>56,519</b>	<b>213,179</b>	<b>144,100</b>	<b>413,798</b>
Allocation of support and governance costs	19,742	124,358	(144,100)	-
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>76,261</b>	<b>337,537</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>413,798</b>



## Magic Me

### Notes to the financial statements

#### For the year ended 31 March 2025

##### 6. Total expenditure (continued)

The increase in fundraising salary expenses is primarily due to having a full-time Fundraising and Development Manager in post.

##### 7. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2025 £	2024 £
Depreciation	1,282	2,163
Trustees' remuneration	Nil	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	76	Nil
Independent examiner's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
▪ Independent examination	2,550	2,400
▪ Other services	4,077	6,636

One trustee was reimbursed for expenses related to trustee meeting costs (2024: no trustees were reimbursed for any expenses).

In common with other charities of our size and nature we use our examiners to assist with the preparation of the financial statements. Our examiners have also provided bookkeeping services to the charity during the year.

##### 8. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Salaries and wages	280,457	248,707
Social security costs	23,390	18,813
Pension costs	6,798	5,560
	<b>310,645</b>	<b>273,080</b>

No employees earned more than £60,000 in the current or prior year.

The key management personnel of the charitable company comprise the Trustees, Director, Programme Director and Head of Operations. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel were £139,869 (2024: £138,821).

The increase in staff expenditure is driven by having a full staff body for the majority of the year and more senior capacity available across the organisation. This will change when we change leadership structure in 25/26.

## Magic Me

### Notes to the financial statements

#### For the year ended 31 March 2025

#### 8. Staff costs and numbers (continued)

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Average head count	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>

#### 9. Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

#### 10. Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, fittings & equipment £	IT equipment & website £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>			
At 1 April 2024	239	15,287	<b>15,526</b>
Additions in year	-	556	<b>556</b>
Disposals	-	(797)	<b>(797)</b>
<b>At 31 March 2025</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>15,046</b>	<b>15,285</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1 April 2024	90	12,908	<b>12,998</b>
Charge for the year	60	1,222	<b>1,282</b>
Disposals	-	(630)	<b>(630)</b>
<b>At 31 March 2025</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>13,500</b>	<b>13,650</b>
<b>Net book value</b>			
<b>At 31 March 2025</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>1,546</b>	<b>1,635</b>
At 31 March 2024	149	2,379	2,528

#### 11. Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	2,000	-
Prepayments	5,317	5,378
Accrued income	30,688	2,121
	<b>38,005</b>	<b>7,499</b>

**Magic Me****Notes to the financial statements****For the year ended 31 March 2025****12. Creditors : amounts falling due within 1 year**

	<b>2025</b>	2024
	<b>£</b>	£
Trade and other creditors	<b>16,132</b>	26,180
Accruals	<b>4,222</b>	3,822
	<b><u>20,354</u></b>	<b><u>30,002</u></b>

**13. Analysis of net assets between funds**

	Restricted funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	1,635	<b>1,635</b>
Current assets	38,139	160,704	<b>198,843</b>
Current liabilities	(202)	(20,152)	<b>(20,354)</b>
<b>Net assets at 31 March 2025</b>	<b><u>37,937</u></b>	<b><u>142,187</u></b>	<b><u>180,124</u></b>
<b>Prior period comparative</b>			
	Restricted funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	2,528	2,528
Current assets	49,958	140,764	190,722
Current liabilities	(11,608)	(18,394)	(30,002)
<b>Net assets at 31 March 2024</b>	<b><u>38,350</u></b>	<b><u>124,898</u></b>	<b><u>163,248</u></b>

## Magic Me

### Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

#### 14. Movements in funds

	At 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2025 £
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Artists Residencies	9,498	-	(9,498)	-	-
Artworks	4,535	8,971	(13,506)	-	-
Creative Mix	9,932	39,958	(39,283)	-	<b>10,607</b>
Spark (Formerly Magic Moments)	75	69,631	(50,376)	-	<b>19,330</b>
Charity of Sir Richard Whittington	12,335	-	(12,335)	-	-
Tudor Trust Wellbeing Childhood Trust	1,975	-	(1,975)	-	-
	-	8,000	-	-	<b>8,000</b>
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>38,350</b>	<b>126,560</b>	<b>(126,973)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>37,937</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
General funds	124,898	319,237	(301,948)	-	<b>142,187</b>
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>124,898</b>	<b>319,237</b>	<b>(301,948)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>142,187</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>163,248</b>	<b>445,797</b>	<b>(428,921)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>180,124</b>

#### Purposes of restricted funds

**Artists Residencies** Five year programme which paired four leading arts companies to work with four care homes across Essex, introducing dance, virtual reality, immersive theatre and other forms, challenging the arts and care sectors to raise expectations of what older people will enjoy and understand. Evaluation partner Anglia Ruskin University published Dare to Imagine their research findings in Year 5 and our Care Home Guide to Creativity shared activity ideas and approaches with care home professionals.

Supported by Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

**Artworks** The last phase of a four year project to provide work placements, supporting young Tower Hamlets and Hackney residents to pursue careers in the arts. Focused on those who currently face barriers e.g. Black, Asian and other racially minoritised people, and those from working-class backgrounds. We have subsequently been able to offer one permanent and two freelance roles to participants.

Supported by London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Westfield East Bank Creative Futures Fund supported by Westfield Stratford City, and Foundation for Future London.



**Notes to the financial statements**

**For the year ended 31 March 2025**

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**14. Movements in funds (continued)**

**Purposes of restricted funds (continued)**

**Creative Mix** Continuation of a three and a half year project, which brings generations together through creative activities and celebratory events. Social isolation is combatted, increasing individuals' confidence and wellbeing whilst building connections across different faiths, cultures and backgrounds.

Supported by London Borough of Tower Hamlets, and The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington.

**Spark (Formerly Magic Moments)** Our programme of sensory arts activities for older people living in care homes. Spark is delivered by Magic Me artists working in partnership with care home staff through training opportunities, resources and visits, in person and remotely, supporting everyone's right to creative expression. This year's sessions took place across Essex.

Supported by The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington, The Childwick Trust, Essex County Council, Players of the People's Postcode Lottery and The Rayne Foundation.

**Charity of Sir Richard Whittington** These funds for work with older people in London supported our Roots and Routes project, part of our LAB programme, which is a place-based arts project with community partners across Tower Hamlets. Older and younger people came together with artists to map intergenerational relationships locally, increasing their connection with each other and their pride in the place they live. Routes and Roots took place across six partner venues in the borough.

**Tudor Trust Wellbeing** A specific fund provided by Tudor Trust to be used to support staff wellbeing during the four years of their unrestricted grant. We used it to underpin an additional week of shared staff leave after the August Bank Holiday.

**Childhood Trust** Our Champion Funders for the collaborative match funded Big Give Christmas Campaign in 2024 - their £8,000 of support was unlocked by matching donations from pledgers and the public. Funding was to support new projects to bring joy, encourage interaction & understanding, break down barriers, increase well-being and build stronger, safer communities with a focus on our Tower Hamlets community work.

## Magic Me

### Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

#### 14. Movements in funds (continued)

Prior period comparative	At 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
Artists Residencies	12,814	18,500	(21,816)	-	9,498
Artworks	21,898	34,040	(51,403)	-	4,535
Creative Mix	-	22,649	(12,717)	-	9,932
Spark (Formerly Magic Moments)	72	78,554	(78,551)	-	75
The Charity of Sir Richard Whittington	9,139	50,000	(46,804)	-	12,335
Tudor Wellbeing	2,000	-	(25)	-	1,975
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>45,923</b>	<b>203,743</b>	<b>(211,316)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>38,350</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
<i>Designated funds:</i>					
Equipment	1,000	-	-	(1,000)	-
Office renovations	2,522	-	-	(2,522)	-
Staff cover	8,000	-	-	(8,000)	-
Safeguarding	2,500	-	-	(2,500)	-
Training	4,717	-	-	(4,717)	-
<i>Total designated funds</i>	<b>18,739</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(18,739)</b>	<b>-</b>
General funds	76,406	232,235	(202,482)	18,739	124,898
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>95,145</b>	<b>232,235</b>	<b>(202,482)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>124,898</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>141,068</b>	<b>435,978</b>	<b>(413,798)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>163,248</b>

#### 15. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the current or prior year.