



Annual report 2025

Play together.
Be unstoppable.

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"I never thought I could play Jupiter, but now I can, and my Dad is going to be so proud."

Orchestral Weeks member, aged 13

"Thank you so much, if ever your job feels difficult, just know that yesterday was possibly one of his favourite in his almost 12 years. He has waited so long to be involved at a level like this, and absolutely loved his experience with you all."

Parent of an Orchestral Days young musician

"I can't thank you enough for the enormous part you and the NCO team have played in the musical journey of our family over the past 6 years. They have played phenomenal music and made friends for life."

Parent of Orchestral Weeks member

About NCO

Vision

To be a household name, known for inspiring children nationwide through a vibrant music community that nurtures potential and opens doors.

Purpose

To champion the life-changing power of music.

Mission

Together, we are using the power of music to create a supportive community that enriches lives.



Our Values

Dare to Dream

We believe no dream is too big.

When we're free to dream, explore, create and play, the world opens up. In music and in life, dream big – you never know what incredible things you'll discover along the way.

Strength of Spirit

We believe orchestral music shapes skills and hearts.

Orchestral music is a wondrous world that nurtures empathy, resilience, and the courage to face whatever life throws our way. It builds strength of spirit, deepening connections to ourselves and the world around us.

Every Voice Matters

We believe everyone has their own brilliance.

Everyone has a unique potential waiting to shine. In a supportive, inclusive environment, we can discover our own brilliance, find our voice, and grow in confidence and creativity.

The Power of Us

We believe in the power of community.

Our power lies in our unity; we grow together, support each other, and become something greater as one.

Trustee Annual report 2025

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the National Children's Orchestras **Trustees Annual Report 2025**. This year has been extraordinary in both scale and spirit, as more children than ever discovered the joy, challenge and transformative power of making music together. Across our auditioned and non-auditioned programmes, 2025 has shown us—again—that when children are given space to explore their creativity, surrounded by support and inspiration, they achieve remarkable things.

We are immensely proud to have reached 2,240 children through our activities this year, with a 37% increase in those experiencing our free, non-auditioned opportunities. Their energy and curiosity filled rehearsal rooms, concert and school halls across the UK, from first-time ensemble players to young musicians shaping ambitious orchestral performances.

Our commitment to equity and inclusion continues to deepen, reflected in our new strategy to nearly double the number of children we reach by 2028 – especially those in state education and through our partnership work to widen access for disabled young musicians.

Musically, 2025 has been a vibrant celebration of imagination and diversity. With 72 works performed, two new commissions, and programming that spanned environmental themes, film music, new arrangements and orchestral masterpieces, our young musicians embraced every moment with courage and creativity.

We are grateful for the continued trust and generosity of Arts Council England, our supporters, partners, families and the many individuals who make NCO's work possible. Together, we are building a stronger, more inclusive musical future—one where every child can dream big, find their voice, and be unstoppable.

– Louise Mitchell – Chair of Trustees

2025 highlights



2025 highlights

- 1** 2,240 children in total engaged in NCO activities during the year, an increase of 37% compared to 2024.
- 2** Of these, 1,574 children aged 4-16 years took part in NCO's free, non-auditioned activities including schools' concerts, workshops and Orchestral Days delivered in partnership with Music Hubs and other music education providers.
- 3** 1,068 online auditions were submitted for 2026 Orchestral Weeks and Weekends, the highest number of total applicants in over a decade, demonstrating the increasing need and value placed on NCO's programmes by children, parents and teachers across the UK.
- 4** Our EDI Action Plan is now fully embedded in our new 3-year growth strategy (2026-2028), prioritising opportunity and diversity with pledges to nearly double the number of children reached by 2028 and increase representation from children in state school in auditioned programmes.
- 5** Our team completed the Accessible Musical Progression Toolkit as a test partner, co-designed with Open Up Music, aiming to increase access for more young disabled musicians to take part in mainstream orchestral experiences.
- 6** A huge range and diversity of music was performed across all activities – 72 pieces including two new commissions (*Bang & Bhumi*) by four composers as part of the diversity-led ABRSM composers' scheme as well as new orchestral arrangements and body percussion pieces.
- 7** Increased focus on environmental responsibility through programming across the year, including *There's No Planet B* concert presented by TV personality and environmentalist Naomi Wilkinson at Manchester's Bridgewater Hall, four themed concerts by Weekend Orchestras based on *Our Universe, Our Planet, Our World* featuring a new body percussion piece by Greg Beardsell – *Rethink, Reduce, Recycle, Repair, Reuse*.
- 8** 12 students took part in NCO's Tutor Experience Placements and 25 took part as Insights Placements, demonstrating NCO's commitment to supporting the next generation of music educators and enhancing its partnerships across Higher Education.
- 9** 7 NCO Orchestras performed 15 concerts, in Basingstoke, Birmingham, Bolton, Bristol, Portsmouth, Manchester, Shrewsbury and London, to 4,500 audience members and our first pre-concert workshop at The Anvil, Basingstoke, sold out.
- 10** Successful launch of our new brand and website, the culmination of a yearlong consultation project with all stakeholders resulting in invitation to present our case study in brand co-creation with Morris Hargreaves Mclntyre at the Arts Marketing Association Annual Conference in Edinburgh.

NCO young Musicians 2025



664

children aged 8-14 years were part of NCO's auditioned Orchestral Weeks (previously National programme) and auditioned Orchestral Weekends (previously Projects programme) in 2025.

We celebrate the diversity of our membership because it makes our orchestras and organisation better. In our 2025 auditioned orchestras (Orchestral Weeks and Orchestral Weekends):

59%

392 (59%) are from a global majority background.

68

We supported 68 children through our Financial Support programme who otherwise would not have been able to take part.

1,574

1,574 children aged 4–16 years and 37 students took part in NCO's non-auditioned activities in 2025 including Orchestral Days, Schools Concerts, partner projects and student placements.

"He has had such an amazing time away with the team... I have never been able to afford to send him to any music residential but you gave him that chance and he has enjoyed every second."

Parent of Orchestral Weeks member



Children across all our activities in 2025 come from a wide range of schools including home schooling. They might already attend their local music education hub, or a specialist school or junior conservatoire, or they might be brand new to making music in ensembles and orchestras.

We welcome and support children with neurodiversity and those who require additional support, and continually improve our expertise to enable these children to thrive. In 2025 we completed our work with Open Up Music in their development of the AMP toolkit and now have a 3-year plan to improve accessibility at NCO to enable more disabled musicians to take part in the future.

Auditioned activities



Orchestral Weeks

Our Weeks programme (previously named the National programme) consists of three age-banded orchestras for children in school years 7, 8 and 9.

Through residential activity and public performances, children exceed all musical expectations whilst exploring their creativity and discovering their identity, learning how to support their wellbeing and making lifelong memories and friendships.

319 children **aged 11-14** took part in our residential Orchestral Weeks.

They formed **3 orchestras**, taking part in:

6 orchestral residencies lasting a week each including **more than 200 hours** of sectional and orchestral rehearsals.

6 public concerts and 1 family sharing concert.

1 weekend showcase.

NCO Changemakers (see Child Voice) told us that their favourite parts of the residential were spending time with their friends and learning new things.

As part of our rebrand, we commissioned new photography to showcase the different angles of the NCO experience, celebrating inspiration and creativity, vibrancy and boldness and inclusivity and collaboration.

“According to my daughter, the entire experience was truly fantastic and exceeded all her expectations. The organisation, the guidance from the tutors, and the overall atmosphere were exceptional.”

Parent of Orchestral Weeks member

“My son feels very lucky and proud to be part of NCO, with lots of happy memories of making wonderful orchestral music together! It was a great sense of achievement performing after weeks, months of preparation and dedication!”

Parent of an Orchestral Weeks member



Orchestral Weekends

Our Weekends programme (previously named the Projects programme) is designed for children from a wider age range to explore large scale orchestral playing, some of whom are taking part in these activities for the first time.

345 children **aged 8-14** took part in our non-residential Orchestral Weekends.

They formed **4 orchestras** in Bolton,

Birmingham and London, taking part in:

8 orchestral weekends including

68 hours of sectional and orchestral rehearsals

8 family sharing concerts

NCO Changemakers (see Child Voice) told us that their favourite parts of the weekends were meeting new people and learning new things in sectionals.

"The staff were friendly, helpful and if I was stuck on something, they always helped by explaining it to me in a way that I understood. Being part of the orchestra made me feel like I am part of a community."

Orchestral Weekends member

"I just wanted to feed back what an amazing time my son had! Things can be difficult for him to access due to his Special Educational Needs/disability so I just wanted to say thank you to everyone for a great weekend and for making him so comfortable."

Parent of Orchestral Weekends member

online

All NCO 2025 members of our Weeks and Weekends activities took part in our online programme, which helps children prepare musically and feel more confident when they join our in-person activities. Resources and online events also supported musical learning, creativity and wellbeing.

There were:

5 hours of inspiring webinars featuring BBC Young Musician of the Year Finalists; musical presenters and content creators Anna Lapwood and Linton Stephens; TV personality

and presenter Naomi Wilkinson and musician Simmy Singh talking everything environment; stars of sport and wellbeing Claire Bennett & Katy Jones; and guest artists Carol Jarvis & Chris Augustine.

14 orchestra meet ups featuring getting to know each other games, quizzes, musical learning and more.

Children told us that their favourite parts of the online programmes were getting to meet their peers and playing games.



Auditions for Weeks and Weekends

Every year hundreds of children submit a free audition to take part in NCO's auditioned orchestral programmes. In 2025, we had 1,068 auditions from children interested in taking part in our 2026 Orchestral Weeks

and Orchestral Weekends. Every audition celebrates the joy of playing and love for music from children and young people from all corners of the United Kingdom.

Non – auditioned Activities

Our expanding non-auditioned activity developed in 2025, and we made plans for growth over three years.

Orchestral Days

Our new and expanding Orchestral Days programme is designed to support young musicians in the earlier stages of their playing, who are not already part of our auditioned orchestras. They often include children who are taking part in large ensemble activities for the first time.



80 children aged 8-14 took part in our one-off Orchestral Days.

They took place in Dorset in partnership with Wessex Music, and Devon in partnership with Devon Music Education Hub.

children took part in:

Confidence building games and activities that helped them get to know each other and the NCO team.

Rehearsals exploring a specially arranged multi-level ensemble piece to support children at the level they are playing.

An improvisation-based composition workshop to create their own soundtrack to short film clips.

A family sharing concert.

“He had an amazing day. The energy and enthusiasm from the conductor and tutors was palpable and the atmosphere was electric! There was a real warmth in the room and the performances were fantastic. I loved the improvisation as well.”

Parent of an Orchestral Days
young musician



“I already felt confident playing in an ensemble but was a bit nervous about it beforehand because I did not know anyone else. It helped me be more confident playing with people I did not know.”

Young musician after an Orchestral Day



Our 'What Happens at an Orchestral Day' film brings these activities to life.

[Watch on YouTube now](#)

Workshops

NCO was invited to take part in a skills-building Folk Music Day led by Future Talent and in partnership with West of England Music & Arts. We jointly welcomed **17** children to the workshop in Bristol where they explored folk music repertoire and techniques with Tamsin Elliott.

Our Partner Workshop with Young Sounds Connect programme ran alongside NCO North

Orchestra's summer Weekend activity at Stoller Hall and welcomed **44** children (from Bradford Music & Arts Service, Bolton Music Service and One Education Manchester) and 2 NCO Alumni (now ambassadors with National Youth Orchestra). They took part in a Breathing Techniques workshop with Guest Artist Katy Jones and performed Greg Beardsell's 's body percussion piece *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle* side by side with NCO North Orchestra.

Schools concerts

1,293 children engaged with our in-school interactive concerts at Newhall Park Primary School and Silsden Primary School in Bradford, St. Mary's Primary School in Bury and Manley Park Junior School in Manchester.

Based on the Building Blocks of Ensemble Music Making, the children were treated to a performance by NCO Tutors and students from the Royal Northern College of Music. Engagingly presented by Jessie Maryon-Davies, the children enjoyed learning about

dynamics, tempo and teamwork through call and response, graphic scores and careful listening. **123** whole-class string learners from these schools were led in a joyful 30 minute workshop by Veronica Urrego supporting their musical progression and experiences of performance.

Our schools concerts were delivered in partnership with Bradford Music & Arts and Greater Manchester Music Hub.

Oak Academy

Members of our Under 14 Orchestra were filmed playing as a continuation of our collaboration with Bristol Beacon and Cathedral Schools Trust and their involvement in the writing of a new innovative primary

music curriculum, accessible for thousands of children across England. The resources launched in November 2025 and NCO's involvement provides a valuable peer-to-peer learning opportunity.

Artistic development

Big, brave & bold

NCO children are incredible! Their innate curiosity and joyful enthusiasm bring a freshness to performance that is truly special. After all, making music together means everything to them in that moment.

"I am so grateful for your choosing repertoire that inspired and challenged them and that they had these opportunities with such care and fun along the way."

Parent of NCO Orchestral Weeks
member



In 2025, we showcased a diverse range of repertoire reflecting musical ambition and our commitment to creative thematic programming.

Young musicians performed everything from classic orchestral masterpieces - from Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, William Walton's *Henry V* Suite, and Erich Korngold's *The Sea Hawk* - to Bernard Herrmann's *Vertigo* Suite and Nino Rota's *La Strada*.

Our programming also explored environmental and nature inspired themes. Jean Sibelius's *Finlandia*, Gustav Holst's 'Jupiter' from *The*

Planets, and contemporary pieces such as Debbie Wiseman's *Carnival of the Endangered Animals* and Rachel Portman's *Endangered* formed the heart of our *There's No Planet B* programme.

Combined with family-friendly concerts that featured everything from Benjamin Britten's *Young Persons Guide to the Orchestra*, Leonard Bernstein and Perez Prado's *Mambos* through to *Captain Marvel*, *Ghostbusters* and *Kiki's Delivery Service*, our 2025 programmes demonstrated the vibrancy of orchestral music balancing tradition, storytelling, innovation and accessibility for performers and audiences alike.

creative children

We create a supportive environment where every child can explore their creativity, experiment freely, and take artistic risks.

Through musical activities such as composition, improvisation, body percussion, and spoken word, they are encouraged to express themselves in new and imaginative ways. This creative practice not only nurtures artistic excellence but also builds critical thinking, giving quieter children the space to shine and allowing fresh ideas and bold experimentation to bubble to the surface.



In 2025:

NCO's Surround Sound programme brought children taking part in Orchestral Weeks together in **42** mixed instrument groups (14 per Orchestra), to improvise, compose and collaborate during in-person sessions, to create and perform new music that they can be proud of having created themselves.

The creative compositions for each orchestra were inspired by the themes of each concert programme – one orchestra explored the storytelling techniques central to film music and another expressed musically their fictional escape from Earth to refuge on Jupiter following environmental apocalypse.

Our online programme gave children access to introductory videos by each of our Creative Leads – Jonathan James, Delia Stevens, Georgina Aasgaard, Raph Clarkson and Ed Babar, as well as creative activities including Listening Tasks and Musical Postcards.

NCO Changemakers (see Child Voice) scored Creativity as 4.1 out of 5 and enjoyed the opportunities to create new music in Surround Sound and interpret pieces in new ways.

We prioritise children having a voice at NCO – we encourage them to speak up and we respond to them and this dialogue informs change.

child voice

104 children were young presenters at our concerts, including 6 who spoke about what the environment means to them at our *There's No Planet B* concert.

Members of our residential weeks orchestras expressed themselves through their creative ideas and composition in their Surround Sound programmes (See 'Creative children'). All children had multiple opportunities to give feedback about our programmes.

There were:

14 interactive polls during online Orchestra Meet Ups.

35 Changemakers who spent more than 10 hours reflecting on their year at NCO through focus groups at activity and completion of journals at home.

6 orchestra councils at Weeks orchestra residencies.

471 children expressed an interest in being a Creative Ambassador, with many of those then responding to given themes by creating video content for our social media channels across the year.

NCO Changemakers told us that their favourite parts of being a member of NCO were meeting like-minded people and making new friends, learning from our tutors and the help and support they received from the Support Team. They felt welcomed and happy to be a member of NCO's orchestras and we motivated to play their instruments more.

NCO Changemakers also expressed that they felt more confident now and many are looking to audition for other programmes and ensembles that they would not have before.

Industry leaders

In 2025, NCO engaged 121 creative freelancers as tutors, conductors, guest artists, creative and wellbeing leads and instrument support. 37 students also took part in student placement programmes.

Bringing this number of people together through NCO activity is a unique opportunity to support the UK's freelance creative workforce and inform the future of orchestral training for young musicians. Each person brings their expert knowledge, skills and perspective as well as the curiosity and generosity to learn and share best practice with their peers.

During the year, music tutors and conductors benefited from wellbeing sessions led by experts in performance anxiety and mindfulness, the ergonomics of instrumental playing, injury prevention, physical fitness and team building. Our brilliant creative leads support tutors through in-person training and resources so that they develop their own creative practice and the skills required to facilitate child-led creativity.



Our activity teams in 2025 included:

86 music tutors
59 support team
37 student placements

10 creative and wellbeing leads
4 guest artists
12 conductors
6 composers/arrangers
4 nurses
9 orchestra/instrument support

“My NCO weeks really are a highlight in my year. You are all a really wonderful team to work for and be around, both tutors and management alike. I am always so inspired and uplifted by you all.”

Tutor

“I truly look forward to it every year. Everything is very well organised and prepared so that we can get through the music in detail and efficiently, and I feel very well supported both by tutors and support team/management.”

Conductor

Student placements

Our student placements gave career-defining opportunities for students to gain experience and connections in music education and classical music.

12 students took part in our Tutor Experience placements at our Weeks residentials. They shadowed NCO tutors to gain experience in rehearsal planning, coaching styles, engagement and wellbeing, group dynamics and behaviour and creative composition.

25 students took part in our Insights placements, playing in our Weekends orchestras, to provide support and role-modelling, lead some sectionals, assist with child engagement, and manage group dynamics.



Musical diversity

We seek the best representation we can in the artists and musicians we work with and the music we play, to enable a greater diversity of experiences and perspectives in our programmes.

In 2025 there were:

- 5** female conductors
- 8** female composers
- 21** living composers
- 9** global majority composers
- 2** female guest artists (of 4)
- 2** global majority guest artists (of 4)
- 6** new commissions
- 1** new full orchestral arrangement



We want to remove barriers for children and adults under-represented at NCO to take part in our activities and be part of our teams. We worked with Open Up Music on their pilot of AMP Toolkit in 2025 to audit NCO's accessibility and feed into our new 3-year organisational strategy.

Audiences

A wide-angle photograph of a large orchestra performing in a modern concert hall. The hall's interior is characterized by a curved, warm-toned wooden wall and ceiling. The orchestra, consisting of many musicians in red uniforms, is seated on a raised platform. In the foreground, the audience is seated in rows of chairs, facing the stage. The lighting is warm and focused on the performers.

**7 NCO orchestras performed
15 concerts, in Basingstoke,
Birmingham, Bolton, Bristol,
Portsmouth, Manchester,
Shrewsbury and London to
4,500 audience members.**

“The two girls at the front who were lead violinists in the first half (and one girl in the second half) were absolutely out of this world – totally sublime.”

Audience Member at
Bridgewater Hall, Manchester

Our first pre-concert workshop at The Anvil, Basingstoke sold out.

Open, excited and welcoming audiences rewarded the remarkable playing from young musicians with applause and standing ovations.

Our child-centred and child-led social media content exposed the creativity, vibrancy and inclusivity of NCO young musicians and activities.

Our most engaging piece of content was our Under 13 *Star Wars* Bassoon reel achieving 14.8K views, engaging 5,121 accounts and receiving 180 likes.

We had 6.9% more Facebook followers and 17.9% more followers on Instagram, in 2025, than in 2024.

Our YouTube channel was viewed 43,143 times in 2025, with 2,560 hours of NCO footage watched.

What do NCO musicians do next

We believe orchestral music shapes skills and hearts and we use the power of music to create supportive communities that enrich lives. The confidence, resilience and teamwork learned through music become skills for life, whether children go on to pursue a music career or to take the transferable skills into other careers and enjoy music as a hobby.

Former members of NCO have progressed on to lots of musical opportunities including that NCO alumni make up **51 out of 158** players in National Youth Orchestra 2026.

Wellbeing & environmental

Happy and healthy children

We believe everyone has their own brilliance and we craft supportive, inclusive environments in all our activities to enable them to discover their unique potential, find their voice and grow in confidence and creativity.

We also know NCO power lies in our unity – children (and grown-ups!) grow together, support each other and become something greater through the power of community.



“He had a brilliant, brilliant time on the residential. Thank you so much for helping him to feel safe and secure.”

Parent of an Orchestral Weeks member

In 2025 our programmes included:

25 hours of wellbeing sessions at residential.

This included physical fitness with Ninja Warrior **Henry Cookey**; teamwork with Commonwealth Games Gold Medalist Fencer **Claire Bennett**; injury prevention and posture with physiotherapist **Sarah Upjohn**; ergonomic use of our bodies with **Sophie Till**; mindfulness and performance coaching with **Tom Taffinder**; and connectivity with nature, movement and the world around us with **Simmy Singh**.

There were:

Online resources including **11** wellbeing videos, **2** guides and **1** webinar on looking after

body and mind, as well as **8** familiarisation documents with photos as an introduction to activity venues, and **14** online meet ups (see Online) to meet fellow orchestra members and our Support Team.

6 appreciation boxes, one for each residential, to celebrate each other, the activity or the team.

36 moments to experience an inspiring Thought for the Day.

Children told us they felt happy and encouraged by the team during their time at NCO, and that they had someone they could easily turn to if they needed support.



"Thank you for your emails before the NCO residential and for keeping an eye out for my daughter - I felt a lot more relaxed knowing she would be so well taken care of. She had an absolutely brilliant time!"

Parent of an Orchestral Weeks member

Environmental

We are committed to limiting the negative impact of our activities on our natural environment and to empowering the young people we work with to be part of making meaningful change.

We developed our *There's No Planet B* programme further this year. **10** children from our Under 13 Orchestra volunteered to do an environmental project with musician and environmentalist Simmy Singh. In the spring they took part in a mindfulness session where they explored the sounds of their natural world and how human impact changes these sounds change over time. In the summer they thought about the connection between their musical repertoire and the environment and considered how music can open up conversations. Simmy also worked with the whole orchestra during an interactive Thought for the Day.

We welcomed presenter and environmentalist Naomi Wilkinson for our *There's No Planet B* concert. Naomi worked closely with **6** musicians from the orchestra to co-present the concert for audiences at Bridgewater Hall, with Young Presenters preparing their own introductions to the pieces.

The concert programme included music from Debbie Wiseman (*Carnival of the Endangered Animals*), Rachel Portman (*Endangered*), along with Leonard Bernstein's *Slava* and Jean Sibelius' *Finlandia*.

In the interval, children from the audience created brilliant drawings inspired by what they had heard on stage.

All our Weeks and Weekends members had the opportunity to attend and interact with our *There's No Planet B* webinar (see 'Online programme') presented by Catherine Arlidge in conversation with Naomi Wilkinson and Simmy Singh.

We focussed on digital marketing wherever possible again this year and launched our new website which is hosted by B Corp and 1% for the Planet member Krystal, whose hosting is 100% renewably powered.



communications

This year, we crafted a new visual brand, new language and messaging, and developed a new website for NCO. This has given our charity a vibrant, confident and creative new identity to reflect the organisation's purpose – to champion the life-changing power of music.

Crafted with The Yard Creative, following substantial stakeholder feedback and the articulation of a new brand framework with Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, the new brand has been created by the young musicians, teams and donors at the heart of NCO. It reflects what NCO means to them and proudly states our ambition for a future where we provide more opportunities to more children, welcoming young musicians into supportive communities that enrich their lives and give them skills that endure.

Not only does the new website better reflect the full range of opportunities to get involved with NCO, but a log in area of the website for young musicians is easier to navigate, presenting resources and events to prepare for in-person activity and engage more deeply in musical learning, creativity and wellbeing.

You can read more about how our physical and digital audiences developed this year in the 'Audiences' section.

Fundraising

We were grateful to continue receiving multi-year public funding from Arts Council England in 2025 as a National Youth Music Organisation, alongside support from trusts and foundations, corporate partners and individual donors.



A significant milestone this year was the launch of NCO's rebrand and new website, which strengthened supporter communications and helped us better articulate our impact and charitable mission. Fundraising activity focused on deepening relationships and building sustainable income. Total income included £304,826 in statutory Arts Council funding, £111,300 from trusts and foundations, £25,000 in corporate sponsorship, and £24,447 in individual giving. We were grateful to receive legacy gifts from the late Margaret Gilding, a longstanding friend of NCO, and from the late Mary Cordall whose gift will be used in 2026 to support NCO percussionists as per her wishes.

In-person engagement remained a key priority, with flagship events at the Reform Club, London, and Bristol Beacon introducing NCO to new audiences, generating valuable follow-up conversations and securing new Friends. Donor receptions at concerts further supported stewardship by thanking

supporters and deepening relationships. Our trusts and foundations strategy remained rooted in the generous support of a wide range of small trusts and foundations, while beginning to explore larger, multi-year and unrestricted opportunities aligned with NCO's growth plans. We would particularly like to extend our thanks to the Cecil King Memorial Foundation for their longstanding support of our activities and public concerts and The Leverhulme Trust for their multi-year grant towards Financial Support. ABRSM renewed its corporate partnership, including the valued composer mentor programme. During the year, NCO also joined the Fundraising Regulator scheme, reinforcing our commitment to transparency, accountability and best practice.

Together, these developments provide strong foundations for the future, while continued diversification and growth of fundraising income will remain a key priority in the years ahead.

"My daughter was quite nervous going into the workshop but she came out saying that if there is ever another opportunity to attend NCO she would love to go and that it was amazing!!!"

Parent of Orchestral Days young musician

"NCO is a dream come true."

Orchestral Weeks Member

"Absolutely cannot thank the staff enough, so welcoming and encouraging of two very nervous kids who'd never participated in anything similar before. So positive, encouraging and friendly, definitely inspiring for my young musicians. Really amazing opportunity cannot recommend highly enough."

Parent of an Orchestral Days young musician



Future plans



2026 will mark the first year of NCO's 3-year growth strategy. During this period, NCO will prioritise children in state education and aims to double the number of children engaged annually by 2028.

Key developments for 2026

- Total confirmed membership for auditioned programmes in 2026 is 725, the largest number of children since 2020 and with increased representation from children in state education.
- Free, non-auditioned Orchestral Days will expand from 2 (2025) to 7 and take place in Dorset, Devon, Wiltshire, NE Somerset, Hull, Lincoln and Lancashire, in partnership with music hubs.
- Continued focus on opening access for disabled young musicians – further work to be carried out in relation to venues, communications and the role of youth voice to fully embed changes identified through the AMP toolkit research partner project with Open Up Music.
- Organist Anna Lapwood will perform as guest artist and present NCO's Under 14 Orchestra concert at Bristol Beacon on 12th April 2026 including a performance of *How to Train Your Dragon*. Wraparound concert day activity includes a 'Make your Own Dragon' Art Workshop with a Bristol artist to support family audiences in engaging with the programme.
- Audience Development project working with Horfield Primary School on Creative Composition project linking to Under 13 Orchestra *There's No Planet B* performance in Summer 2026 at Bristol Beacon.
- Side by Side performance with Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra's In Harmony musicians at the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Hall as integral part of Under 14 Orchestra concert on Saturday 1st August.
- Musical performance by 6 NCO alumni at an event at 11 Downing Street hosted by the Association of British Orchestras, raising NCO's profile and the important role of youth music in the orchestral sector.

Statement of public benefit

National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain (NCO) provides high quality orchestral training and creative musical opportunities for children aged 8–14, supporting their personal, social and musical development. Our programmes – auditioned and non auditioned – enable young people from across the UK to develop confidence, teamwork, wellbeing and artistic skills through inclusive, inspiring music making.

We ensure public benefit by offering free and/or subsidised activities, financial support schemes, and accessible pathways designed to remove barriers for children from backgrounds currently under-represented in classical music, including those from state schools, disabled young musicians and those at an early stage of their musical development. Through partnerships with schools, music hubs and music education organisations, we extend opportunities to children who might not otherwise access orchestral experiences.

The Trustees confirm that, in delivering NCO's charitable purposes during the year, they have had regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance, as required for charities in England and Wales.

Governance structure and management

Governance framework

National Children's Orchestras is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 19th February 1990 having acquired the whole of the assets, liabilities and activities of the National Children's Orchestra, being a charitable trust created by a deed of trust dated 16th August 1978. The company was set up under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the company and is governed under revised Articles of Association, adopted by the Board on 14th August 2019. The charity has no subsidiary undertakings.

The Trustees (who are also the charity's members) meet quarterly to receive management information from various areas of organisational governance and operations and to agree the strategic direction of the charity. Members meet once annually for the AGM. The Finance Committee also meet at least four times a year, prior to each Full Board Meeting, to approve and monitor financial control, reporting and authorisation systems to secure best practice standards of

project control, financial forecasting, annual budgeting and quarterly financial reporting.

During 2025 the Board reviewed the Terms of Reference for the Trust Board and the Finance Committee and the Scheme of Delegation from the Trustees to the Executive Team. Management grades reflect levels of delegated responsibility and accountability throughout the organisation. All are reviewed annually.

The day-to-day running of the charity is delegated to the Executive Team. However, there are clear areas of decision making retained by the Board (which are outlined in the charity's governance framework and policies) and established reporting frameworks to allow the Board to make these decisions effectively. NCO's policies also contain clear thresholds for reporting to the Board in areas such as Health and Safety, Data Protection, Finance and Safeguarding to facilitate robust monitoring by the charity's Trustees.

Remuneration

NCO has a remuneration policy and a set of clear pay bands for staff which is reviewed annually by the board. A review of pay levels and bands was carried out and approved by the Board in December 2025.

Alongside policy review, the Board reviews salaries on recommendation from the Chief Executive and Finance Committee in relation to % increases to be implemented from 1st January each year. The amount of any increase will be guided by CPI inflation, informal benchmarking with other arts organisations and Real Living Wage guidelines. NCO is a Real Living Wage employer.

Trustee induction and training

As with staff recruitment, National Children's Orchestras require references and DBS checks for new Trustees, in line with the charity's Safeguarding Policy and Safer Recruitment Policy. New Trustees are provided with the Safeguarding Policy, Articles of Association and Code of Conduct upon appointment.

There is a Code of Conduct specifically for Trustees. Trustee induction includes a meeting with both the Chief Executive and the Chair of the Board and the assignment of a buddy from the group of existing Trustees.

A Trustee audit was conducted in 2025. The data was used to inform a recruitment process for new Trustees following the retirement of two Trustees. This resulted in 3 new appointments to be approved at the 2026 AGM. NCO's Chair, Louise Mitchell CBE, is due to retire after 6 years service in May 2026. NCO undertook a recruitment process for her successor and a new Chair, Michael Eakin OBE, will be appointed at the 2026 AGM in May.

Risk management

The organisational risk register is reviewed quarterly by the Senior Management Team and is a standing item at each Board meeting. A specific financial risk register is similarly updated quarterly by the Finance Director and is a standing item at each Finance Committee meeting.

A Risk Management Policy collates and clarifies the charity's approach to risk management and the levels of delegated responsibility in relation to risk.

At the close of 2025 these were the four most significant risk areas:

Child Protection and Safeguarding

The Risk Management Policy cemented that the most important risk area for NCO is in relation to Child Protection and Safeguarding. The Board undertakes an annual review of safeguarding policy and practice and two Trustees have specific safeguarding responsibility. The Safeguarding Policy details appropriate levels of training provided to those who work with NCO.

A Safer Recruitment Policy was adopted by the Board in 2023. All staff and volunteers at NCO must have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

The Head of Safeguarding and Support maintains exceptional safeguarding of children and supports their wellbeing and happiness through dynamic pastoral care.

Health and Safety

There is a Health and Safety Policy in place which details control mitigations in this

area, including specifying the use of Risk Assessments and processes to be followed to ensure the safety of adults and children during activity and of staff and visitors to the office.

The Health and Safety Policy was reviewed in 2025 and the amendments were approved by the Board. A health and safety policy compliance audit was also conducted and shared with NCO's Health and Safety Lead Trustee.

Orchestra Tax Relief

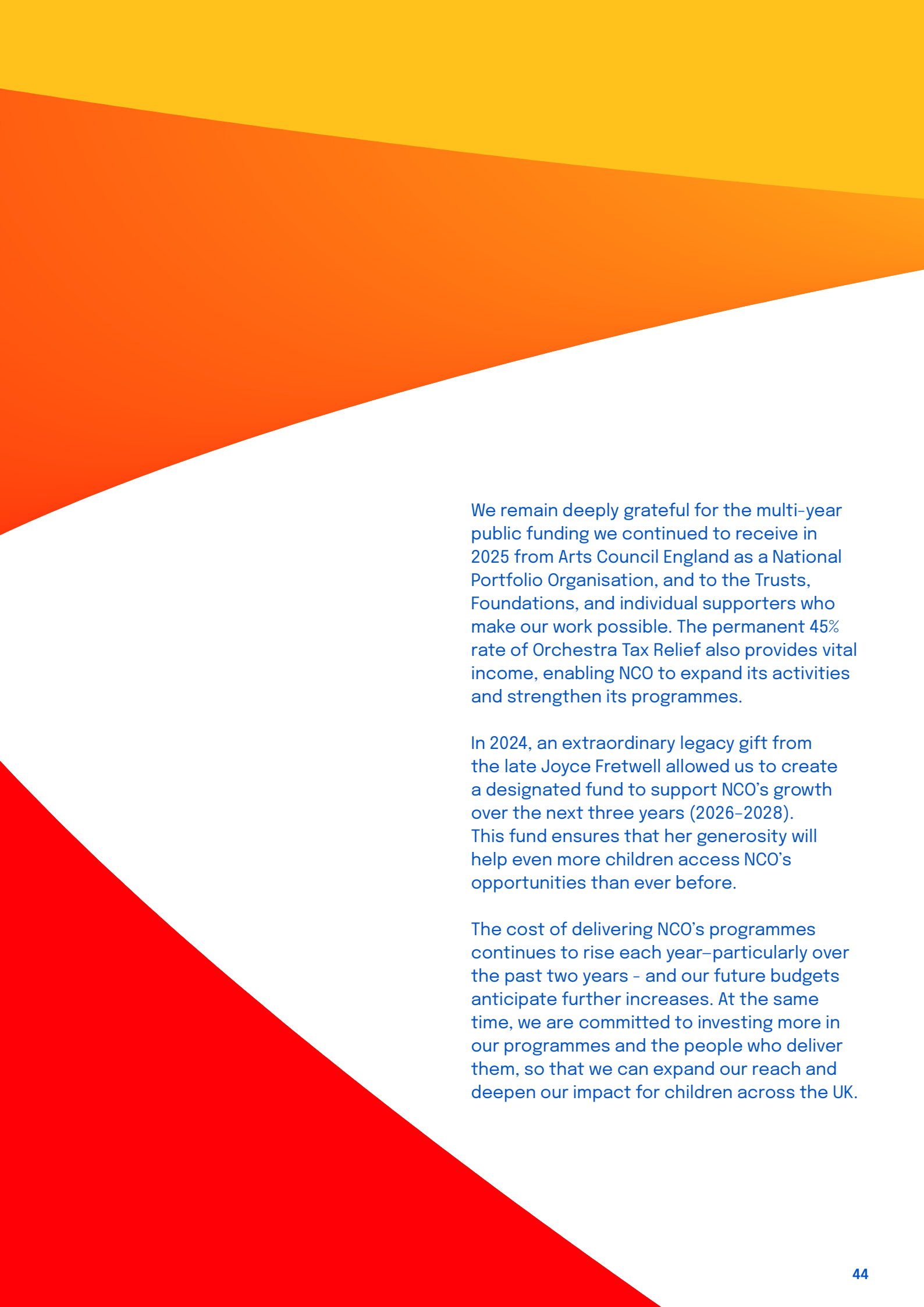
Uncertainty about the level of Orchestra Tax Relief was partly mitigated through HMT's decision in 2024 to set the level of relief at 45% permanently. This does not however guarantee this income source in the future. Financial forecasting and budgeting were completed with this risk area in mind.

Economic Factors

Inflation costs continued to be a risk area for 2025. Again, rising costs were anticipated in forward budgets and regular reforecasting exercises were undertaken by budget holders throughout the year to closely monitor the real impact of the economic landscape on the agreed budget.



Financial sustainability



We remain deeply grateful for the multi-year public funding we continued to receive in 2025 from Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation, and to the Trusts, Foundations, and individual supporters who make our work possible. The permanent 45% rate of Orchestra Tax Relief also provides vital income, enabling NCO to expand its activities and strengthen its programmes.

In 2024, an extraordinary legacy gift from the late Joyce Fretwell allowed us to create a designated fund to support NCO's growth over the next three years (2026-2028). This fund ensures that her generosity will help even more children access NCO's opportunities than ever before.

The cost of delivering NCO's programmes continues to rise each year—particularly over the past two years - and our future budgets anticipate further increases. At the same time, we are committed to investing more in our programmes and the people who deliver them, so that we can expand our reach and deepen our impact for children across the UK.

Raised Income: This is the money we raise from public and private funders consisting of Arts Council England, Trusts and Foundations, sponsorship and donations from individuals.

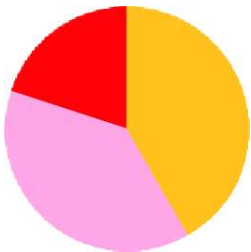
Earned Income: This is the money we receive in membership fees and concert tickets.




Interest and OTR: This is the money we receive from interest and Orchestra Tax Relief.

Charitable Activities: This is the money we spend on running our activities.

Financial Support: This is the money we spend covering all or some of the fees for families who need support.

**Income
2024**

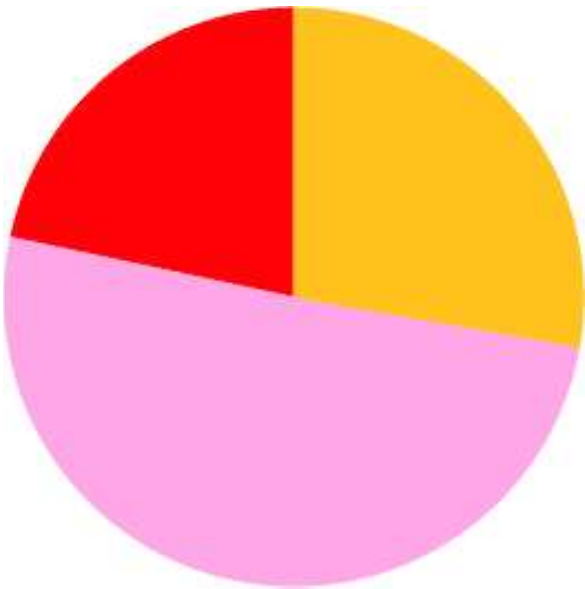


	Raised income	£836,058
	Earned income	£768,335
	Interest and OTR	£396,420
Total		£2,000,813




**Expenditure
2024**

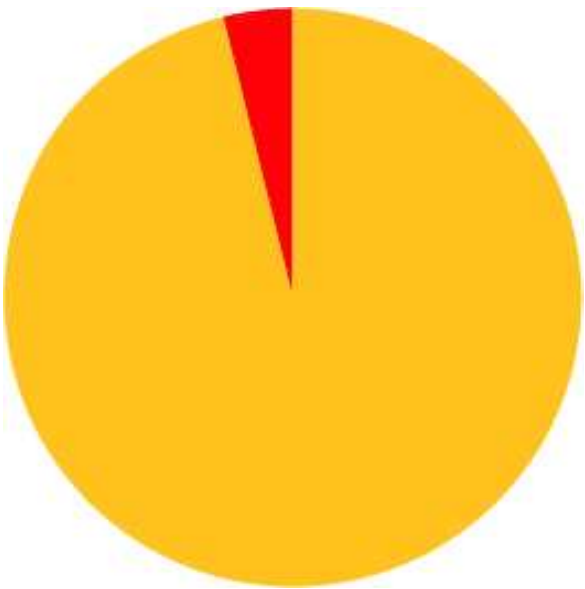


	Charitable Activities	£1,480,719
	Financial Support	£89,345
Total		£1,570,064





Income 2025

	Raised income	£469,497
	Earned income	£845,618
	Interest and OTR	£357,064
Total		£1,672,179



Expenditure 2025

	Charitable Activities	£1,631,770
	Financial Support	£63,120
Total		£1,694,890

Financial review

Financial Review

The Statement of Financial Activities for the year is set out from page 55.

Total income comprised £1,599,076 for unrestricted funds (2024: £1,918,113), £73,103 for restricted funds (2024: £82,700).

Total expenditure was £1,624,731 in unrestricted expenditure (2024: £1,471,289) and £70,159 in restricted expenditure (2024: £98,775).

As at 31st December 2025 the reserves of the charity were £1,110,975 (2024: £1,133,686) of which £280,000 are designated (2024: £446,680) and £22,425 are restricted (2024: £19,481).

Income

Total income was down by £328,634 compared to the previous year due to the large legacy gift in 2024.

NCO received £304,826 in statutory funding as a National Portfolio Organisation with support from the Arts Council of England. £111,300 was achieved through Trusts and Foundations, £23,948 in Individual Giving, and £25,000 in corporate sponsorship.

Earned income also increased by £76,357, achieved through a minimal increase in fee levels for members and box office income. The Charity benefited from £322,433 in Orchestral Tax Relief and £4,423 claim for the year in Gift Aid in the accounting period.

Expenditure

Expenditure increased by £124,826 compared to the previous year. This is due to increasing costs in relation to activity and overheads and investment in NCO's new brand and website.

Reserves policy

Unrestricted Reserves

Having reviewed the charity's reserves policy in March 2026, Trustees identified and agreed that **£700,000** should be retained in unrestricted reserves in line with expenditure and to ensure that the charity is able to continue to deliver essential services for its beneficiaries through sufficient cash reserves in line with cashflow forecasts. Future planning is fundamental to the charity's operation, combining the seasonal nature of annual activities with the necessity of planning programmes more than one year ahead. The reserves

policy reflects the need to provide a degree of security to support advance planning over longer timescales, and to provide confidence to stakeholders that plans are soundly based and funded.

Total unrestricted funds are **£737,319**, after excluding tangible assets of **£71,231**.

A further **£280,000** is held in designated funds to ensure NCO's growth strategy, designed to increase access for young musicians to take part.

Restricted Reserves

These funds are maintained through annual fundraising activities. NCO receives specific donations and grants from which only specific disbursements may be made. An explanation of each restricted reserve and the purposes for which it may be expended are given in Section 20 below. Over the next three years, NCO intends to draw down specific restricted reserves to support the charity's ongoing mission and objectives.

Going Concern

The board is mindful that NCO may continue to deploy some financial reserves to meet the challenges of the ongoing economic situation. This relates to increased costs associated with venues and suppliers driven by the inflationary pressures that continue to affect the UK economy, negatively affecting the charity's expenditure and income streams. The board expects this to

have an impact on both raised income for 2026 and programme expenditure. NCO's Board and Finance Committee will convene quarterly to review the charity's financial position and strategy. The Arts Council of England will also review any financial risk to the charity as a mandatory requirement of the NPO funding arrangement.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also directors of National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain 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 (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 charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these 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 (FRS 102);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards 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 business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company

and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and
- the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

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 reparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Auditors

Following a procurement process, BHP will be proposed for appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

2025 accounts

The 2025 accounts will be approved by the board of Trustees on Thursday 7th May and signed on its behalf by:

Louise Mitchell

L Mitchell

Independent Auditor's Report to the members and Trustees of National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain For the year ended 31st December 2025

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain for the year ended 31st December 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, cash flow statement and the related notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is 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).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31st December 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The Trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' Annual Report which includes the Directors' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Trustees' Annual Report which includes the Directors' Report has been prepared in

accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the the Trustees' Annual Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the Trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and to take advantage of the small companies exemption in preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the Strategic Report.

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement set out on page 49, the Trustees (who are also directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditors under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with regulations made under that Act.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The specific procedures for this engagement and the extent to which these are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are detailed below.

Identifying and assessing risks related to irregularities:

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement and how fraud might occur, including through discussions with the Trustees, discussions within our audit team planning meeting, updating our record of internal controls and ensuring these controls operated as intended. We evaluated possible incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements. We identified laws and regulations that are of significance in the context of the charitable company by discussions with Trustees and updating our understanding of the sector in which the charitable company operates.

Laws and regulations of direct significance in the context of the charitable company include The Companies Act 2006, and guidance issued by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

In addition, the charity is subject to other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which may be fundamental to its ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty. These include health and safety and safeguarding for children.

Audit response to risks identified:

We considered the extent of compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures on the related financial statement items including a review of financial statement disclosures. We reviewed the charitable company's records of breaches of laws and regulations, minutes of meetings and correspondence with relevant authorities to identify potential material misstatements arising. We discussed the charitable company's policies and procedures for compliance with laws and regulations with members of management responsible for compliance.

During the planning meeting with the audit team, the engagement partner drew attention to the key areas which might involve non-compliance with laws and regulations or fraud. We enquired of management whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations or knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud. We addressed the risk of fraud through management override of controls by testing the appropriateness of journal entries and identifying any significant transactions that were unusual or outside the normal course of business. We assessed whether judgements made in making accounting estimates gave rise to a possible indication of management bias. At the completion stage of the audit, the engagement partner's review included ensuring that the team had approached their work with appropriate professional scepticism and thus the capacity to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations and fraud.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Michael Strong (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Saffery LLP, Statutory Auditor

Michael Strong

Saffery LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

Date: 14/05/26
St Catherine's Court
Berkeley Place
Clifton
Bristol
BS8 1BQ

Annual Accounts 2025

Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31st December 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	3	£396,394	£73,103	£469,497	£836,058
Charitable activities	4				
Concerts		£42,239		£42,239	£42,921
Projects		£137,652		£137,652	£120,148
Membership fees		£662,119		£662,119	£602,584
Other trading activities	5	£3,608		£3,608	£2,682
Investments	6	£34,631		£34,631	£29,896
Other	7	£322,433		£322,433	£366,524
Total income		£1,599,076	£73,103	£1,672,179	£2,000,813

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
Expenditure on:					
Raising Funds	8	£125,791		£125,791	£102,256
Charitable activities	9				
Programmes (including online)		£1,311,369		£1,311,369	£1,212,521
Auditions		£31,053	£7,539	£38,592	£24,440
Concerts		£156,018		£156,018	£141,502
Bursaries and Scholarships		£500	£62,620	£63,120	£89,345
Total expenditure		£1,624,731	£70,159	£1,694,890	£1,570,064
Net income / (expenditure)		(£25,655)	£2,944	(£22,711)	£430,749
Transfer between funds	20				
Net movement in funds	20	(£25,655)	£2,944	(£22,711)	£430,749
Total Funds brought forward		£1,114,205	£19,481	£1,133,686	£702,937
Total funds carried forward	20	£1,088,550	£22,425	£1,110,975	£1,133,686

Balance Sheet

as at 31st December 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	2025 Total Funds	2024 Total Funds as Restated
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Assets	15	£71,231		£71,231	£69,448
Current Assets					
Debtors	16	£369,421		£369,421	£418,863
Investments	17	£702,579		£702,579	£448,411
Cash at Bank and in Hand		£730,885	£22,425	£753,310	£911,135
Total		£1,802,885	£22,425	£1,825,310	£1,778,409
Creditors: Amounts Falling Due Within One Year	18	(£785,566)		(£785,566)	(£714,171)
Net Current Assets		£1,017,319	£22,425	£1,039,744	£1,064,238
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities		£1,088,550	£22,425	£1,110,975	£1,133,686
Net assets		£1,088,550	£22,425	£1,110,975	£1,133,686
Restricted Funds	20			£22,425	£19,481
Unrestricted Funds	20			£1,088,550	£1,114,205
Total Charity Funds				£1,110,975	£1,133,686

The notes at pages 65 to 79 form part of these accounts

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

Approved by the Trustees on 7th May 2026

and signed on their behalf by:

Louise Mitchell

L Mitchell – Trustee

Cash flow

	Notes	2025	2024 As Restated
Cash Generated from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	£64,736	£321,539
Net cash provided by operating activities		£64,736	£321,539
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of Tangible Fixed Assets		(£3,024)	
Proceeds from Disposal of Tangible Fixed Assets			
Proceeds from Disposal of Investments			£15,838
Increase in Current Asset Investments		(£254,168)	(£448,411)
Interest Received		£34,631	£29,896
Net Cash Used in Investing Activities		(£222,561)	(£402,677)
Change in Cash and Cash Equivalents in the Reporting Period	2	(£157,825)	(£81,138)
Cash and Cash Equivalents at the Beginning of the Reporting Period		£911,135	£992,273
Cash and Cash Equivalents at the End of the Reporting Period		£753,310	£911,135

Notes to the cash flow statement

1. Reconciliation of net income/(expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities

		2025	2024
Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		(£22,711)	£430,749
Adjustments for:			
Depreciation Charges		£1,241	£772
Interest Received		(£34,631)	(£29,896)
(Increase)/Decrease in Debtors		£49,442	(£101,797)
Increase in Creditors		£71,395	£21,711
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		£64,736	£321,539

2. Analysis of changes in net funds

		At 1st January 2025 As Restated	Cash Flow	At 31st December 2025
Net Cash				
Cash at Bank and in Hand		£911,135	(£157,825)	£753,310
Total		£911,135	(£157,825)	£753,310

Accounting policies

1. Statutory information

National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain is a charitable company limited by guarantee and domiciled in England and Wales. The Charity is registered in England and Wales, Registered Company number 2471385, Registered Charity number 803026. The registered office and principal office is Unit 2.3, Streamline, 436-441 Paintworks, Arncliffe, Leeds, LS16 5PP.

The principal activity of the Charity is to foster and develop the early musical talent of children aged between 8 and 14 years from across the UK, providing world-class opportunities for orchestral training and performance.

2. Accounting policies

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception of investments and musical instruments which are included at market value. The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £1.

Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102 and SORP (FRS 102) the financial reporting standards applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland and Companies Act 2006.

Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the Charity's accounting policies which are described above, 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 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 described below.

Depreciation

Assets are written down over their estimated useful lives. The actual lives of the assets may differ from these estimates. The lives of the assets are kept under review and adjusted as appropriate.

Valuation of musical instruments

Musical instruments are carried at an estimation of their market value, based upon external valuations and the judgement of the Trustees.

Allocation of costs between activities

As a small charity many costs incurred, including staff time, cover more than one activity. These costs are allocated to activities based on the key cost drivers and best estimates of staff time on each activity.

Going concern

The Trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern basis is appropriate and have considered possible events or conditions that might cast significant doubt on the ability of the charitable entity to continue as a going concern. The Trustees have made this assessment for a period of at least one year from the date of approval of the financial statements. The Trustees have concluded that there is a reasonable expectation that the charitable entity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, and there are no material uncertainties. The charitable entity therefore continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing its financial statements.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

In particular:

Donations are recognised when the amount of the donation is known and the receipt of funds is probable.

Income from government and other grants is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions are met, the amount can be measured reliably, and in line with the timing implied by any multi-period grant agreements.

Legacies are recognised when the amount is known with reasonable certainty and the receipt of funds is probable. This may be earlier than the date of receipt of funds where appropriate notification has been received from those dealing with the estate.

Membership income is recognised in the accounting year the membership relates to. Any advance payments of membership are deferred to the period to which they relate.

Income from Concerts and Projects is recognised once the event has taken place. Any advance payments are deferred.

Income from trading activities is recognised upon sale of the associated merchandise.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Grants relate to bursaries and scholarships for attending the courses run by the Charity. Where a member of the Orchestra awarded a grant does not attend, the associated grant is cancelled.

Allocation and apportionment of costs

Costs are allocated to the different activities of the charity on an actual basis where possible. Where costs incurred relate to a number of activities these are apportioned on the basis of time spent on those activities.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Music – 20% on cost

Fixtures and fittings – 20% on cost

Fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation.

Items purchased for less than £200 are not capitalised and are expensed through the Statement of Financial Activities.

Musical instruments

Musical instruments are held at valuation and are not depreciated. These are revalued every five years with movements in the market value being taken to the Statement of Financial Activities in the year of revaluation. Individual instruments valued at less than £200 each are written off.

Taxation

National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain is registered as a Charity with the Charity Commission under number 803026. Because of its charitable status, National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain is exempt from United Kingdom taxation on its surplus income and capital gains.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees.

Restricted funds can be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

Trade and other debtors

Trade and other debtors that are receivable within one year and do not constitute a financing transaction are recorded at the undiscounted amount expected to be received, net of any impairment.

Those that are receivable after more than one year or constitute a financing transaction are recorded initially at fair value less transaction costs and subsequently at amortised costs, net of impairment.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash at bank and in hand, demand deposits with banks and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less and bank overdrafts. In the balance sheet, bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings or current liabilities.

Trade and other creditors

Trade and other creditors are initially recognised at the transaction price and are thereafter stated at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the effect of discounting would be immaterial, in which case they are stated at cost.

Current asset investments

Current asset investments comprise demand deposits with banks with maturities of over three months.

Notes

3	Donations and Legacies		2025	2024
	Donations		£159,203	£193,814
	Legacy Income		£1,045	£337,308
	Government Grants		£304,826	£300,002
	Tax Recovered		£4,423	£4,934
			£469,497	£836,058
	The charity received government grants, defined as funding from Arts Council England (and in 2024 also the Department for Education) to fund charitable activities. The total value of such grants in the year ended 31st December 2025 was £304,826 (2024: £300,002). There are no unfulfilled conditions or contingencies attaching to these grants.			
4	Income from Charitable Activities		2025	2024
	Concert Income		£42,239	£42,921
	Projects Income		£137,652	£120,148
	Membership Fees		£662,119	£602,584
			£842,010	£765,653
5	Other Trading Activities		2025	2024
	Other Revenue		£3,608	£2,682
			£3,608	£2,682
6	Investment Income		2025	2024
	Investment Income		£34,631	£29,896
			£34,631	£29,896

Notes

7	Other Income		2025	2024
	Orchestra Tax Relief		£322,433	£366,524
			£322,433	£366,524
8	Raising Funds		2025	2024
	Raising Donations and Legacies			
	Staff Costs		£111,860	£91,501
	Other Costs		£13,931	£10,755
			£125,791	£102,256

9	Charitable Activities Costs	Direct Costs	Grant Funding of Activities (See note 10)	Support Costs (See note 11)	Totals 2025
	Programmes (including online)	£650,625		£660,744	1,311,369
	Auditions	£38,592			£38,592
	Concerts	£156,018			£156,018
	Bursaries and Scholarships	£700.00	£62,420		£63,120
		£845,935	£62,420	£660,744	£1,569,099
	Prior Year	Direct Costs	Grant Funding of Activities (See note 10)	Support Costs (See note 11)	Totals 2024
	Programmes (including online)	£619,370		£593,151	£1,212,521
	Auditions	£24,440			£24,440
	Concerts	£141,502			£141,502
	Bursaries and Scholarships	£701	£88,644		£89,345
		£786,013	£88,644	£593,151	£1,467,808

Notes

10	Grants Payable		2025	2024
	Bursaries and Scholarships		£62,420	£88,644
	The total grants paid to individuals during the year was as follows:			
	Grant		£62,420	£88,644
	All grants relate to bursaries provided to individuals as a subsidy towards their membership fees and travel costs.			

11	Support Costs		Management	Governance	Totals 2025
	Programmes (including online)		£604,801	£55,943	£660,744
			£604,801	£55,943	£660,744
			Management	Governance	Totals 2024
	Programmes (including online)		£542,726	£50,425	£593,151
			£542,726	£50,425	£593,151

12	Net Income/Expenditure		2025	2024
	Net income/ (expenditure) is stated after charging:			
	Auditor' Remuneration		£12,960	£11,640
	Auditor's Remuneration for non audit work		£3,360	£3,180
	Depreciation - Owned Assets		£1,214	£772

Notes

13	Trustees' Remuneration and Benefits			
	There were no Trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31st December 2025 nor for the year ended 31st December 2024, except as disclosed in Note 23.			
	Trustees' Expenses			
	Trustees' expenses in respect of attendance at board meetings during the year totalled £162 (2024: £186).			
14	Staff Costs		2025	2024
	Wages and Salaries		£454,671	£417,361
	Social Security Costs		£42,993	£34,482
	Pension Costs		£10,309	£8,877
			£507,973	£460,720
	The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:		2025	2024
			15	15
	There was one employee whose total employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) were between £60,000 – £70,000 (2024: one).			
	The Orchestras employed 193 freelancers during the year (2024: 183), who worked a total of 2,100 days (2024: 1,863 days).			
	The support team provide pastoral support for the members of the Orchestras, whilst tutors help with the musical elements. These freelancers are paid on a per session basis.			

Notes

15	Tangible Fixed Assets		Music	Instruments	Fixtures and Fittings	Totals
	Cost					
	At 1st January 2025		£21,720	£169,850	£75,453	£267,023
	Additions				£3,024	£3,024
	Disposals					
	At 31st December 2025		£21,720	£169,850	£78,477	£270,047
	Depreciation & Impairment					
	At 1st January 2025		£21,720	£102,325	£73,530	£197,575
	Charge for the Year				£1,241	£1,241
	Eliminated on Disposals					
	At 31st December 2025		£21,720	£102,325	£74,771	£198,816
	Net Book Value					
	At 31st December 2025			£67,525	£3,706	£71,231
	At 31st December 2024			£67,525	£1,923	£69,448
	External valuations were obtained for the musical instruments in 2021, that totalled £67,525. It is the opinion of the Trustees that there has been no material movement to the value of the instruments since the external valuations were obtained, up to the 31st December 2025 year end.					

Notes

16	Debtors: Amounts Falling Due Within One Year		2025	2024
	Trade Debtors		£5,646	£4,797
	Prepayments and Accrued Income		£37,134	£38,247
	Tax Recoverable		£326,641	£375,819
			£369,421	£418,863
17	Current Asset Investments		2025	2024 As Restated
	Amounts Held on Deposit with Maturities Over 3 Months		£702,579	£448,411
			£702,579	£448,411
18	Creditors: Amounts Falling due Within One Year		2025	2024
	Trade Creditors		£21,689	£3,190
	Social Security and Other Taxes		£2,014	£1,854
	Deferred Income		£734,749	£677,822
	Accruals		£27,114	£31,305
			£785,566	£714,171
	Further information on deferred income is provided in note 24.			
19	Leasing Agreements			
	Minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases fall due as follows:		2025	2024
	Within One Year		£8,848	£11,185
	Between One and Five Years			
			£8,848	£11,185
	Lease payments recognised as an expense in the year amounted to £46,364 (2024: £45,636).			

Notes

20	Movement in Funds		At 1/1/25	Net Movement in Funds	Transfers Between Funds	At 31/12/25
	Unrestricted Funds					
	General Fund		£667,525	£27,345	£113,680	£808,550
	Unrestricted - Designated Funds					
	Rebranding Reserve		£53,000	(£53,000)		
	Risk Reserve		£210,000		(£210,000)	
	Organisational Development		£183,680		£96,320	£280,000
			£1,114,205	(£25,655)		£1,088,550
	Restricted Funds					
	Bursary Fund			£13,075		£13,075
	E Rorison Winter Award		£3,631	(£200)		£3,431
	Access and Progression		£7,539	(£9,931)		(£2,392)
	Vivienne Price Memorial Fund		£8,311			£8,311
			£19,481	£2,944		£22,425
	Total Funds		£1,133,686	(£22,711)		£1,110,975
	Net Movement in Funds, included in the above are as follows:					
			Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Gains and Losses	Movement in Funds
	Unrestricted Funds					
	General Fund		£1,599,076	(£1,571,731)		£27,345
	Unrestricted - Designated Funds					
	Rebranding Reserve			(£53,000)		(£53,000)

Notes

			Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Gains and Losses	Movement in Funds
	Risk Reserve					
	Organisational Development					
			£1,599,076	(£1,624,731)		(£25,655)
	Restricted Funds					
	Bursary Fund		£73,103	(£60,028)		£13,075
	E Rorison Winter Award			(£200)		(£200)
	Access and Progression			(£9,931)		(£9,931)
	Vivienne Price Memorial Fund					
			£73,103	(£70,159)		£2,944
	Total Funds		£1,672,179	(£1,694,890)		(£22,711)
	Comparatives for Movement in Funds					
			At 1/1/24	Net Movement in Funds	Transfers Between Funds	At 31/12/24
	Unrestricted Funds					
	General Fund		£410,165	£467,704	(£210,344)	£667,525
	Unrestricted - Designated Funds					
	Rebranding Reserve		£47,216	(£20,880)	£26,664	£53,000
	Risk Reserve		£210,000			£210,000
	Organisational Development				183,680	£183,680
			£667,381	£446,824		£1,114,205

Notes

			At 1/1/24	Net Movement in Funds	Transfers Between Funds	At 31/12/24
	Restricted Funds					
	Bursary Fund			(£5,944)	£5,944	
	E Rorison winter award		£3,831	(£200)		£3,631
	Access and Progression		£17,470	(£9,931)		£7,539
	Vivienne Price memorial fund		£14,255		(£5,944)	£8,311
			£35,556	(£16,075)		£19,481
	Total Funds		£702,937	£430,749		£1,133,686
	Comparative net movement of funds included in the above are as follows:					
			Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Gains and Losses	Movement in Funds
	Unrestricted Funds					
	General Fund		£1,918,113	(£1,450,409)		£467,704
	Unrestricted - Designated Funds					
	Rebranding Reserve			(£20,880)		(£20,880)
	Risk Reserve					
			£1,918,113	(£1,471,289)		£446,824
	Restricted Funds					
	Bursary Fund		£82,700	(£88,644)		(£5,944)
	E Rorison Winter Award			(£200)		(£200)
	Access and Progression			(£9,931)		(£9,931)
			£82,700	(98,775)		(16,075)
	Total Funds		£2,000,813	(1,570,064)		£430,749

Notes

Unrestricted Reserves

Please refer to P48

Restricted Funds

Please refer to P48

Bursary Fund

This fund is maintained through annual fundraising activities. NCO receives specific donations from which only bursary payments may be made. Distributions are made annually to support the membership of children from lower income families who might otherwise not be able to take up their places. As well as contributions to all or part of orchestra membership fees, financial assistance is also available towards the costs of travelling to orchestral activities and for NCO clothing. Awards are made against a sliding scale on the basis of annual household income. Applications are scrutinised, and awards made, by an internal NCO panel. The NCO Board regularly reviews bursary expenditure and scales to ensure that NCO is offering as much help as fundraising allows.

E Rorison Winter Award

Elizabeth Rorison, a former Trustee of NCO, bequeathed £5,000 towards an annual winter concert award.

Access and Progression

This fund represents money received to support the engagement activities.

Notes

Vivienne Price Memorial Fund

This fund has been established through donations made to NCO in memory of Vivienne Price MBE, NCO's Founding Patron, and the proceeds of a 'Grade-One-athon' fundraising activity undertaken by NCO tutors, Trustees and staff during 2015. The proceeds will be distributed over time at the discretion of the Artistic Director and Principal Conductor towards: scholarships for children who might not otherwise be able to take up their places, an annual prize to a member of Under 13 Orchestra, and the purchase of musical equipment for the general benefit of current and future members of NCO orchestras.

Transfers between funds

The transfers between funds in the prior year represents the contribution from restricted funds towards core activities of the charity and the purchase of fixed assets, as agreed by the donor, for use in core activities.

Analysis of net assets between funds						
			Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total
	Year to 31st December 2025					
	Tangible Fixed Assets		£71,231			£71,231
	Net Current Assets		£737,319	£280,000	£22,425	£1,039,744
	Total Funds		£808,550	£280,000	£22,425	£1,110,975

			Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total
	Year to 31st December 2024					
	Tangible Fixed Assets		£69,448			£69,448
	Net Current Assets		£598,077	£446,680	£19,481	£1,064,238
	Total Funds		£667,525	£446,680	£19,481	£1,133,686

Notes

21	Employee Benefit Obligations				
	Pension contributions amounting to £10,309 (2024: £8,877) were recognised as an expense in the SoFA in respect of the Charity's defined contribution pension scheme. These costs are charged in full to unrestricted funds.				
22	Contingent Liabilities				
	The client has an obligation under their rental lease to make good the property at the end of the lease. No provision has been made for this liability as the cost cannot be reliably quantified.				
23	Related Party Disclosures				
	During the year a number of the Trustees made donations to the Charity, these were made without condition.				
	During the year 1 Trustee, L Stott, was paid a total of £450 (2024: £313) for services as a tutor. The fees paid were in line with those paid to other tutors and freelancers providing similar services to the Charity.				

24	Deferred income		2025	2024
	Accruals and deferred income includes the following items of income which have been deferred as at 31st December 2025:			
	Membership deferred at 1st January 2025		£677,822	£644,130
	Released to income in the year		(£677,822)	(£644,130)
	Grant funding received in advance			
	Membership deferred at 31st December 2025		£734,749	£677,822
			£734,749	£677,822
	Membership relates to the calendar year, places are awarded at the end of the previous year and fees are often received in advance of the start of that year. In accordance with the accounting policy, membership income received in relation to the following year is deferred.			

Notes

25	Post balance sheet events			
	The Trustees have no post balance sheet events to report.			
26	Prior Period Adjustments			
	Changes to the Balance Sheet	As Previously Reported	Adjustment	As Restated at 31st Dec 2024
	Current Assets			
	Current Asset Investments		£448,411	£448,411
	Cash at Bank and in Hand	£1,359,546	(£448,411)	£911,135
	Net Assets	£1,133,686		£1,133,686
	Total Charity Funds	£1,133,686		£1,133,686
	During the audit of the financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2025, it was identified that current asset investments amounting to £448,411 had been incorrectly classified as cash and cash equivalents in the prior year's financial statements as at 31st December 2024. This error arose due to a misclassification of asset classes.			
	The investments related to deposits held in fixed-term accounts with maturities of over 3 months. In accordance with FRS 102, such deposits do not meet the definition of cash equivalents.			
	The comparative figures have been restated accordingly. The correction has no impact on the total net assets or deficit for the year ended 31st December 2024.			

Notes

27	Comparatives for the statement of financial activities			
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds
	Income and Endowments from			
	Donations and Legacies	£753,358	£82,700	£836,058
	Charitable Activities			
	Concerts	£42,921		£42,921
	Projects	£120,148		£120,148
	Membership Fees	£602,584		£602,584
	Other Trading Activities	£2,682		£2,682
	Investment Income	£29,896		£29,896
	Other Income	£366,524		£366,524
	Total	£1,918,113	£82,700	£2,000,813
	Expenditure on			
	Raising Funds	£102,256		£102,256

Notes

		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds
	Charitable Activities			
	Programmes (including online)	£1,212,521		£1,212,521
	Auditions	£14,509	£9,931	£24,440
	Concerts	£141,502		£141,502
	Bursaries and Scholarships	£501	£88,844	£89,345
	Total	£1,471,289	£98,775	£1,570,064
	Net Income/(Expenditure)	£446,824	(£16,075)	£430,749
	Transfers Between Funds			
	Net Movement in Funds	£446,824	(£16,075)	£430,749
	Total Funds Brought Forward	£667,381	£35,556	£702,937
	Total Funds Carried Forward	£1,114,205	£19,481	£1,133,686

**Thank
yous**

Thank you

Trustees

Alison Mears
Alistair Butt
Beth Higham-Edwards
Christine Wu
Clare Jack
George Caird
Kadiatu Kanneh-Mason
Letty Stott
Louise Mitchell (Chair)
Lucy Maguire
Roger Tomlinson
Sophie Jerrold
Stuart Burns
Uchenna Ngwe

Thanks also to Trustees who have retired from our board during this year:

Jonathan Mayes (Deputy Chair) and **William Norris**

Administrative Staff

Sophie Lewis
Chief Executive
Becky Cresswell
Communications Director
Charlotte Taras
Communications Manager
Abby Capern
Communications Assistant
Tammy Daly
Programme and Orchestras Director

Andrew Thompson
Programme and Orchestras Manager

Olivia Jollands
Programme and Orchestras Manager

Hannah Findlater
Programme and Orchestras Administrator

Katie Axelson
Music Librarian

Alice Morrison
Development Director

Sarah Freeman
Head of Development

Tamsin Oldham
Head of Engagement

Siobainn Chaplin
Head of Safeguarding and Support

Beth Mackenzie
Head of Business Administration

Thanks also to colleagues who have moved on to new adventures during this year:

Catherine Arlidge and **Jessica Hill.**

Freelance team

Music Tutors

Abi Hyde-Smith
Aisling Palmer
Aisling Reilly
Alex Willett

Amy Thomas
Andres Yauri
Anna Caban
Anna Vaughan
Andy Wilson
Anthony Bailey
Anton Clarke-Butler
Arlene MacFarlane
Bindi McFarlane
Bryony Mycroft
Catherine Handley
Catrin Win Morgan
Catriona McDermid
Chris Augustine
Chris Barrett
Chris Beagles
Claire Hasted
Clare Thompson
Connie Tanner
David Munn
Elen Hydref
Elfair Grug
Elsa Bradley
Emma Purslow
Francesca Moore-Bridger
Fraser Gordon
Gabi Swallow
Gabriella Dall'Olio
Hayley Wild
Heidi Bennett
Helen Brew
Helen Edgar
Helen Kuby
Henry Roberts
Ian Forgrieve
Jacqueline Phillips
Jenny Weir
Jim Maynard

Thank you

Jo Bradley

Jo Lively

Joanne Green

Jonathan Trim

Josh Salter

Julian Atkinson

Kath Gittings

Kesari Pundarika

Kirsty Matheson

Liz Fyfe

Liz Trigg

Louise Braithwaite

Lynn Henderson

Marged Hall

Meadow Brookes

Mariella Bromfield

Matt Bain

Matt Palmer

May Halyburton

Melanie Martin

Melanie Rothman

Neil Fulton

Nico Bricht

Owen Cox

Rachel Holt

Rachel Wick

Richard Shrewsbury

Richard Steggall

Robyn Lund

Roisin Ni Dhuill

Ruby Aspinall

Ruby Orłowska

Ryan Linham

Sally O'Brien

Sally-Ann Anderson

Sam Kinrade

Sophie Roper

Sophie Simpson

Sue Baxendale

Tim Barber

Tom Highnam

Veronica Urrego

Vicky Lee

Zoe Matthews

Conductors

Adam Gibbs

Andy Morley

Caroline Hobbs-Smith

Dominic Wheeler

Greg Beardsell

Helen Harrison

Jack Ridley

Jonathan Trim

Matthew Quinn

Natalia Luis-Bassa

Rebecca Miller

Veronica Urrego

Creative Leads

Delia Stevens

Ed Babar

Georgina Aasgaard

Jonathan James

Raph Clarkson

Wellbeing Leads

Claire Bennett

Henry Cooley

Sarah Upjohn

Sophie Till

Tom Taffinder

Support Managers & Assistant Support Managers

Alexander Leadbeater

Brian Weir

Charlotte Hill

Dave Muncey

Elizabeth O'Neill

Emily Stephens

James Fisher

Support Team

Aaron Pring

Adam Al-Naisiri

Aidan Campbell

Alex Boyd-Bench

Alex Gray

Anna Gambrill

Asher Penny

Benedict King

Charlie Hodge

Edward Hyde

Ee Ann Ho

Eleanor Hall

Faith Stonehewer

George Hillier

Grace Harman

Hannah Seymour

Harry Appleby-Taylor

Holly Payne

Iona Griffiths

Isabel Thompson

Jodie Mitson

Josephine Connor

Joshua Cusworth

Kathryn Titcomb

Katy Harrison

Katie Macdonald

Thank you

Kezia Elliot
Klara Sweeney
Leo Schartz
Louis Benneyworth
Lucy Heppel
Lucy Keeley
Lucy Little
Maisie Veitch
Marcus Leung
Matthew Sutton
Melissa Doody
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Nadia Wilson
Nick Williams
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Rhiannon Bedford
Roisin Craney
Sabrina Ko
Sam Hill
Sam Holburt
Sam Middleton
Sarah Chew
Steph Yim
Susanna Alsey
Thomas Judge
Toby Johnson-Jones

Instrument Support

Callum Davis
David Wheeler
Edward Simons
George Brady
Hannah Spry
Jordan Kinsey
Milly Deering
Toby Johnson-Jones
Torbin Collier

Orchestra Managers, Assistant Orchestra Managers & Concert Managers

Alex Tighe
Liz Dixon
Mary Owens
Rebecca Coleman

Guest Artists

Chris Augustine
Carol Jarvis
Katy Jones
Nate Holder

Webinar & Concert Guests / Presenters

Alicia Li-Yan-Hui
Anna Lapwood
Carol Jarvis
Chris Augustine
Jamaal Kashim
Linton Stephens
Naomi Wilkinson
Simmy Singh

Nurses

Joanna Carnegie
Karen Lang
Kate Hollis
Sam Young

Thank you

We would like to thank our wonderful supporters, partners, and Friends and Patrons, as listed below, for their extraordinary support towards our 2025 programme. Their generous donations, grants, sponsorships and encouragement enables what we do. To each of you – we could not do it without you. Thank you.

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Families

We are so grateful for the generosity and support shown to us in donations from NCO families this year. Thank you.

Thank you

Partners

NCO is deepening existing partnerships and developing further collaborations across the UK to support a greater diversity of children, young musicians and their families to engage with NCO.

We are committed to providing and supporting access to music making and concerts and look forward to continuing existing and developing new relationships with: ABRSM, Association of British Orchestras, Birmingham Conservatoire, Bradford Music & Arts Service, Bolton Music Service (GMMH), Bristol Beacon, Devon Music Education Hub, Future Talent, In Harmony, Hull Music Hub, Lancashire Music Hub, Lincolnshire Music Hub, Music Mark, Music Masters, Music for Youth, Nucleo, our fellow National Youth Music Organisations, One Education Manchester (GMMH), Open Up Music, Royal Northern College of Music, West of England Music & Arts, Wessex Music, Wiltshire Music Centre, Young Sounds UK.

Friends and Patrons

Thank you to our dedicated supporters for their regular donations through NCO's Friends and Patrons scheme. They are:

Principal Patrons

Anonymous Donor

Howard & Celia Gough

Patrons

**Anthony &
Stella Capo Bianco
Louise Mitchell**

Forte Friends

**John Bradley
Nina Kaye &
Timothy Nathan
Andrew Kemble
Jean Marsh
Robert Mitchell
William O'Farrell
Paul & Alison Richards**

Crescendo Friends

**Alan Clarkson
Jonathan Dimpleby
Michael Ferraro
Melanie Haydon
Gillian Kemble
Chris Lamb
Dr Alison Leaf
Sophie & Simon Lewis
Kathy & Vince Ludlow
Jonathan Mayes
David Stride**

Clare Thompson

Moira Usher

Brian & Jennifer Weir

The Wyer Family

Pianissimo Friends

Stuart Burns

Mary Cordall

Sarah Freeman

Drs R & B Grover

Eun Jung Ha

Jane & Timothy Harries

Fiona Harvey

Beth Higham-Edwards

Geoffrey Hirst

John & Diana Lampen

J Pont

William Norris

Annabel Noton

Jenna & Hugh Robinson

Michael Ruffle

Peter Stark

Harry & Nicky Yoxall

Special Thanks

We were touched to receive a Legacy Gift this year from **Margaret Gilding**, who was a dedicated, long-term supporter of NCO, and friend of our founder Vivienne Price. We were so sorry to hear of her passing and will be sure to put her kind gift to the best possible use in her memory. We were also so grateful to receive a legacy from the late **Mary Cordall** whose gift will be used in 2026 to support NCO percussionists as per her wishes.

Charity information

Trustees

Louise Mitchell

(Chair)

Alistair Butt

(appointed 6th May 2025)

Stuart Burns

George Caird

Beth Higham-Edwards

Clare Jack

(appointed 6th May 2025)

Sophie Jerrold

(appointed 6th May 2025)

Kadiatu Kanneh-Mason

Lucy Maguire

Jonathan Mayes

(Vice Chair, retired 13th Sept 2025)

Alison Mears Esswood

Uchenna Ngwe

William Norris

(retired 13th Sept 2025)

Laetitia Stott

Roger Tomlinson

Christine Wu

Finance Committee

Members

Stuart Burns

Alistair Butt

(appointed 6th May 2025)

Clare Jack

(appointed 6th May 2025)

Jonathan Mayes

(retired 13th Sept 2025)

William Norris

(retired 13th Sept 2025)

Roger Tomlinson

Christine Wu

Founder

Vivienne Price MBE

Executive Team

Sophie Lewis

- Chief Executive

Catherine Arlidge

- MBE Artistic and Educational Director
(resigned March 2025)

Auditors

Saffery LLP

St Catherine's Court

Berkeley Place

Clifton

Bristol

BS8 1BQ

Bankers

Lloyds TSB Bank PLC

64 High Street

Epsom

Surrey

KT19 8AT

Charity information

The Trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st December 2025.

The Trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1st January 2019).

National Children's Orchestras

Unit 2.3, Streamline
436-441 Paintworks
Arnos Vale
Bristol
BS4 3AS

www.nco.org.uk

Registered Charity Number:

803026

Registered Company Number:

2471385 (England and Wales)



@nco_gb



@ncogb



@National Childrens Orchestras

Photos by Vernon Nash, Paul Blakemore, Mark Allan, Joey Moxley and Chris Payne

Film by Joey Moxley

Report Design by The Yard Creative

Signature: Louise Mitchell
Louise Mitchell (May 8, 2026 12:06:37 GMT+1)
Email: louise@louisemitchell.org

Signature: Michael Strong
Michael Strong (May 14, 2026 14:39:45 GMT+1)
Email: alexandra.momtahan@saffery.com











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Final Audit Report

2026-05-14

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National
Children's
Orchestras



Annual report 2025

Play together.
Be unstoppable.

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"I never thought I could play Jupiter, but now I can, and my Dad is going to be so proud."

Orchestral Weeks member, aged 13

"Thank you so much, if ever your job feels difficult, just know that yesterday was possibly one of his favourite in his almost 12 years. He has waited so long to be involved at a level like this, and absolutely loved his experience with you all."

Parent of an Orchestral Days young musician

"I can't thank you enough for the enormous part you and the NCO team have played in the musical journey of our family over the past 6 years. They have played phenomenal music and made friends for life."

Parent of Orchestral Weeks member

About NCO

Vision

To be a household name, known for inspiring children nationwide through a vibrant music community that nurtures potential and opens doors.

Purpose

To champion the life-changing power of music.

Mission

Together, we are using the power of music to create a supportive community that enriches lives.



Our Values

Dare to Dream

We believe no dream is too big.

When we're free to dream, explore, create and play, the world opens up. In music and in life, dream big – you never know what incredible things you'll discover along the way.

Strength of Spirit

We believe orchestral music shapes skills and hearts.

Orchestral music is a wondrous world that nurtures empathy, resilience, and the courage to face whatever life throws our way. It builds strength of spirit, deepening connections to ourselves and the world around us.

Every Voice Matters

We believe everyone has their own brilliance.

Everyone has a unique potential waiting to shine. In a supportive, inclusive environment, we can discover our own brilliance, find our voice, and grow in confidence and creativity.

The Power of Us

We believe in the power of community.

Our power lies in our unity; we grow together, support each other, and become something greater as one.

Trustee Annual report 2025

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the National Children's Orchestras **Trustees Annual Report 2025**. This year has been extraordinary in both scale and spirit, as more children than ever discovered the joy, challenge and transformative power of making music together. Across our auditioned and non-auditioned programmes, 2025 has shown us—again—that when children are given space to explore their creativity, surrounded by support and inspiration, they achieve remarkable things.

We are immensely proud to have reached 2,240 children through our activities this year, with a 37% increase in those experiencing our free, non-auditioned opportunities. Their energy and curiosity filled rehearsal rooms, concert and school halls across the UK, from first-time ensemble players to young musicians shaping ambitious orchestral performances.

Our commitment to equity and inclusion continues to deepen, reflected in our new strategy to nearly double the number of children we reach by 2028 – especially those in state education and through our partnership work to widen access for disabled young musicians.

Musically, 2025 has been a vibrant celebration of imagination and diversity. With 72 works performed, two new commissions, and programming that spanned environmental themes, film music, new arrangements and orchestral masterpieces, our young musicians embraced every moment with courage and creativity.

We are grateful for the continued trust and generosity of Arts Council England, our supporters, partners, families and the many individuals who make NCO's work possible. Together, we are building a stronger, more inclusive musical future—one where every child can dream big, find their voice, and be unstoppable.

– Louise Mitchell – Chair of Trustees

2025 highlights



2025 highlights

- 1** 2,240 children in total engaged in NCO activities during the year, an increase of 37% compared to 2024.
- 2** Of these, 1,574 children aged 4-16 years took part in NCO's free, non-auditioned activities including schools' concerts, workshops and Orchestral Days delivered in partnership with Music Hubs and other music education providers.
- 3** 1,068 online auditions were submitted for 2026 Orchestral Weeks and Weekends, the highest number of total applicants in over a decade, demonstrating the increasing need and value placed on NCO's programmes by children, parents and teachers across the UK.
- 4** Our EDI Action Plan is now fully embedded in our new 3-year growth strategy (2026-2028), prioritising opportunity and diversity with pledges to nearly double the number of children reached by 2028 and increase representation from children in state school in auditioned programmes.
- 5** Our team completed the Accessible Musical Progression Toolkit as a test partner, co-designed with Open Up Music, aiming to increase access for more young disabled musicians to take part in mainstream orchestral experiences.
- 6** A huge range and diversity of music was performed across all activities – 72 pieces including two new commissions (*Bang & Bhumi*) by four composers as part of the diversity-led ABRSM composers' scheme as well as new orchestral arrangements and body percussion pieces.
- 7** Increased focus on environmental responsibility through programming across the year, including *There's No Planet B* concert presented by TV personality and environmentalist Naomi Wilkinson at Manchester's Bridgewater Hall, four themed concerts by Weekend Orchestras based on *Our Universe, Our Planet, Our World* featuring a new body percussion piece by Greg Beardsell – *Rethink, Reduce, Recycle, Repair, Reuse*.
- 8** 12 students took part in NCO's Tutor Experience Placements and 25 took part as Insights Placements, demonstrating NCO's commitment to supporting the next generation of music educators and enhancing its partnerships across Higher Education.
- 9** 7 NCO Orchestras performed 15 concerts, in Basingstoke, Birmingham, Bolton, Bristol, Portsmouth, Manchester, Shrewsbury and London, to 4,500 audience members and our first pre-concert workshop at The Anvil, Basingstoke, sold out.
- 10** Successful launch of our new brand and website, the culmination of a yearlong consultation project with all stakeholders resulting in invitation to present our case study in brand co-creation with Morris Hargreaves Mclntyre at the Arts Marketing Association Annual Conference in Edinburgh.

NCO young Musicians 2025



664

children aged 8-14 years were part of NCO's auditioned Orchestral Weeks (previously National programme) and auditioned Orchestral Weekends (previously Projects programme) in 2025.

We celebrate the diversity of our membership because it makes our orchestras and organisation better. In our 2025 auditioned orchestras (Orchestral Weeks and Orchestral Weekends):

59%

392 (59%) are from a global majority background.

68

We supported 68 children through our Financial Support programme who otherwise would not have been able to take part.

1,574

1,574 children aged 4–16 years and 37 students took part in NCO's non-auditioned activities in 2025 including Orchestral Days, Schools Concerts, partner projects and student placements.

"He has had such an amazing time away with the team... I have never been able to afford to send him to any music residential but you gave him that chance and he has enjoyed every second."

Parent of Orchestral Weeks member



Children across all our activities in 2025 come from a wide range of schools including home schooling. They might already attend their local music education hub, or a specialist school or junior conservatoire, or they might be brand new to making music in ensembles and orchestras.

We welcome and support children with neurodiversity and those who require additional support, and continually improve our expertise to enable these children to thrive. In 2025 we completed our work with Open Up Music in their development of the AMP toolkit and now have a 3-year plan to improve accessibility at NCO to enable more disabled musicians to take part in the future.

Auditioned activities



Orchestral Weeks

Our Weeks programme (previously named the National programme) consists of three age-banded orchestras for children in school years 7, 8 and 9.

Through residential activity and public performances, children exceed all musical expectations whilst exploring their creativity and discovering their identity, learning how to support their wellbeing and making lifelong memories and friendships.

319 children **aged 11-14** took part in our residential Orchestral Weeks.

They formed **3 orchestras**, taking part in:

6 orchestral residencies lasting a week each including **more than 200 hours** of sectional and orchestral rehearsals.

6 public concerts and 1 family sharing concert.

1 weekend showcase.

NCO Changemakers (see Child Voice) told us that their favourite parts of the residential were spending time with their friends and learning new things.

As part of our rebrand, we commissioned new photography to showcase the different angles of the NCO experience, celebrating inspiration and creativity, vibrancy and boldness and inclusivity and collaboration.

“According to my daughter, the entire experience was truly fantastic and exceeded all her expectations. The organisation, the guidance from the tutors, and the overall atmosphere were exceptional.”

Parent of Orchestral Weeks member

“My son feels very lucky and proud to be part of NCO, with lots of happy memories of making wonderful orchestral music together! It was a great sense of achievement performing after weeks, months of preparation and dedication!”

Parent of an Orchestral Weeks member



Orchestral Weekends

Our Weekends programme (previously named the Projects programme) is designed for children from a wider age range to explore large scale orchestral playing, some of whom are taking part in these activities for the first time.

345 children **aged 8-14** took part in our non-residential Orchestral Weekends.

They formed **4 orchestras** in Bolton,

Birmingham and London, taking part in:

8 orchestral weekends including

68 hours of sectional and orchestral rehearsals

8 family sharing concerts

NCO Changemakers (see Child Voice) told us that their favourite parts of the weekends were meeting new people and learning new things in sectionals.

"The staff were friendly, helpful and if I was stuck on something, they always helped by explaining it to me in a way that I understood. Being part of the orchestra made me feel like I am part of a community."

Orchestral Weekends member

"I just wanted to feed back what an amazing time my son had! Things can be difficult for him to access due to his Special Educational Needs/disability so I just wanted to say thank you to everyone for a great weekend and for making him so comfortable."

Parent of Orchestral Weekends member

online

All NCO 2025 members of our Weeks and Weekends activities took part in our online programme, which helps children prepare musically and feel more confident when they join our in-person activities. Resources and online events also supported musical learning, creativity and wellbeing.

There were:

5 hours of inspiring webinars featuring BBC Young Musician of the Year Finalists; musical presenters and content creators Anna Lapwood and Linton Stephens; TV personality

and presenter Naomi Wilkinson and musician Simmy Singh talking everything environment; stars of sport and wellbeing Claire Bennett & Katy Jones; and guest artists Carol Jarvis & Chris Augustine.

14 orchestra meet ups featuring getting to know each other games, quizzes, musical learning and more.

Children told us that their favourite parts of the online programmes were getting to meet their peers and playing games.



Auditions for Weeks and Weekends

Every year hundreds of children submit a free audition to take part in NCO's auditioned orchestral programmes. In 2025, we had 1,068 auditions from children interested in taking part in our 2026 Orchestral Weeks

and Orchestral Weekends. Every audition celebrates the joy of playing and love for music from children and young people from all corners of the United Kingdom.

Non – auditioned Activities

Our expanding non-auditioned activity developed in 2025, and we made plans for growth over three years.

Orchestral Days

Our new and expanding Orchestral Days programme is designed to support young musicians in the earlier stages of their playing, who are not already part of our auditioned orchestras. They often include children who are taking part in large ensemble activities for the first time.



80 children aged 8-14 took part in our one-off Orchestral Days.

They took place in Dorset in partnership with Wessex Music, and Devon in partnership with Devon Music Education Hub.

children took part in:

Confidence building games and activities that helped them get to know each other and the NCO team.

Rehearsals exploring a specially arranged multi-level ensemble piece to support children at the level they are playing.

An improvisation-based composition workshop to create their own soundtrack to short film clips.

A family sharing concert.

“He had an amazing day. The energy and enthusiasm from the conductor and tutors was palpable and the atmosphere was electric! There was a real warmth in the room and the performances were fantastic. I loved the improvisation as well.”

Parent of an Orchestral Days
young musician



“I already felt confident playing in an ensemble but was a bit nervous about it beforehand because I did not know anyone else. It helped me be more confident playing with people I did not know.”

Young musician after an Orchestral Day



Our 'What Happens at an Orchestral Day' film brings these activities to life.

[Watch on YouTube now](#)

Workshops

NCO was invited to take part in a skills-building Folk Music Day led by Future Talent and in partnership with West of England Music & Arts. We jointly welcomed **17** children to the workshop in Bristol where they explored folk music repertoire and techniques with Tamsin Elliott.

Our Partner Workshop with Young Sounds Connect programme ran alongside NCO North

Orchestra's summer Weekend activity at Stoller Hall and welcomed **44** children (from Bradford Music & Arts Service, Bolton Music Service and One Education Manchester) and 2 NCO Alumni (now ambassadors with National Youth Orchestra). They took part in a Breathing Techniques workshop with Guest Artist Katy Jones and performed Greg Beardsell's 's body percussion piece *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle* side by side with NCO North Orchestra.

Schools concerts

1,293 children engaged with our in-school interactive concerts at Newhall Park Primary School and Silsden Primary School in Bradford, St. Mary's Primary School in Bury and Manley Park Junior School in Manchester.

Based on the Building Blocks of Ensemble Music Making, the children were treated to a performance by NCO Tutors and students from the Royal Northern College of Music. Engagingly presented by Jessie Maryon-Davies, the children enjoyed learning about

dynamics, tempo and teamwork through call and response, graphic scores and careful listening. **123** whole-class string learners from these schools were led in a joyful 30 minute workshop by Veronica Urrego supporting their musical progression and experiences of performance.

Our schools concerts were delivered in partnership with Bradford Music & Arts and Greater Manchester Music Hub.

Oak Academy

Members of our Under 14 Orchestra were filmed playing as a continuation of our collaboration with Bristol Beacon and Cathedral Schools Trust and their involvement in the writing of a new innovative primary

music curriculum, accessible for thousands of children across England. The resources launched in November 2025 and NCO's involvement provides a valuable peer-to-peer learning opportunity.

Artistic development

Big, brave & bold

NCO children are incredible! Their innate curiosity and joyful enthusiasm bring a freshness to performance that is truly special. After all, making music together means everything to them in that moment.

"I am so grateful for your choosing repertoire that inspired and challenged them and that they had these opportunities with such care and fun along the way."

Parent of NCO Orchestral Weeks
member



In 2025, we showcased a diverse range of repertoire reflecting musical ambition and our commitment to creative thematic programming.

Young musicians performed everything from classic orchestral masterpieces - from Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, William Walton's *Henry V* Suite, and Erich Korngold's *The Sea Hawk* - to Bernard Herrmann's *Vertigo* Suite and Nino Rota's *La Strada*.

Our programming also explored environmental and nature inspired themes. Jean Sibelius's *Finlandia*, Gustav Holst's 'Jupiter' from *The*

Planets, and contemporary pieces such as Debbie Wiseman's *Carnival of the Endangered Animals* and Rachel Portman's *Endangered* formed the heart of our *There's No Planet B* programme.

Combined with family-friendly concerts that featured everything from Benjamin Britten's *Young Persons Guide to the Orchestra*, Leonard Bernstein and Perez Prado's *Mambos* through to *Captain Marvel*, *Ghostbusters* and *Kiki's Delivery Service*, our 2025 programmes demonstrated the vibrancy of orchestral music balancing tradition, storytelling, innovation and accessibility for performers and audiences alike.

creative children

We create a supportive environment where every child can explore their creativity, experiment freely, and take artistic risks.

Through musical activities such as composition, improvisation, body percussion, and spoken word, they are encouraged to express themselves in new and imaginative ways. This creative practice not only nurtures artistic excellence but also builds critical thinking, giving quieter children the space to shine and allowing fresh ideas and bold experimentation to bubble to the surface.



In 2025:

NCO's Surround Sound programme brought children taking part in Orchestral Weeks together in **42** mixed instrument groups (14 per Orchestra), to improvise, compose and collaborate during in-person sessions, to create and perform new music that they can be proud of having created themselves.

The creative compositions for each orchestra were inspired by the themes of each concert programme – one orchestra explored the storytelling techniques central to film music and another expressed musically their fictional escape from Earth to refuge on Jupiter following environmental apocalypse.

Our online programme gave children access to introductory videos by each of our Creative Leads – Jonathan James, Delia Stevens, Georgina Aasgaard, Raph Clarkson and Ed Babar, as well as creative activities including Listening Tasks and Musical Postcards.

NCO Changemakers (see Child Voice) scored Creativity as 4.1 out of 5 and enjoyed the opportunities to create new music in Surround Sound and interpret pieces in new ways.

We prioritise children having a voice at NCO – we encourage them to speak up and we respond to them and this dialogue informs change.

child voice

104 children were young presenters at our concerts, including 6 who spoke about what the environment means to them at our *There's No Planet B* concert.

Members of our residential weeks orchestras expressed themselves through their creative ideas and composition in their Surround Sound programmes (See 'Creative children'). All children had multiple opportunities to give feedback about our programmes.

There were:

14 interactive polls during online Orchestra Meet Ups.

35 Changemakers who spent more than 10 hours reflecting on their year at NCO through focus groups at activity and completion of journals at home.

6 orchestra councils at Weeks orchestra residencies.

471 children expressed an interest in being a Creative Ambassador, with many of those then responding to given themes by creating video content for our social media channels across the year.

NCO Changemakers told us that their favourite parts of being a member of NCO were meeting like-minded people and making new friends, learning from our tutors and the help and support they received from the Support Team. They felt welcomed and happy to be a member of NCO's orchestras and we motivated to play their instruments more.

NCO Changemakers also expressed that they felt more confident now and many are looking to audition for other programmes and ensembles that they would not have before.

Industry leaders

In 2025, NCO engaged 121 creative freelancers as tutors, conductors, guest artists, creative and wellbeing leads and instrument support. 37 students also took part in student placement programmes.

Bringing this number of people together through NCO activity is a unique opportunity to support the UK's freelance creative workforce and inform the future of orchestral training for young musicians. Each person brings their expert knowledge, skills and perspective as well as the curiosity and generosity to learn and share best practice with their peers.

During the year, music tutors and conductors benefited from wellbeing sessions led by experts in performance anxiety and mindfulness, the ergonomics of instrumental playing, injury prevention, physical fitness and team building. Our brilliant creative leads support tutors through in-person training and resources so that they develop their own creative practice and the skills required to facilitate child-led creativity.



Our activity teams in 2025 included:

86 music tutors
59 support team
37 student placements

10 creative and wellbeing leads
4 guest artists
12 conductors
6 composers/arrangers
4 nurses
9 orchestra/instrument support

“My NCO weeks really are a highlight in my year. You are all a really wonderful team to work for and be around, both tutors and management alike. I am always so inspired and uplifted by you all.”

Tutor

“I truly look forward to it every year. Everything is very well organised and prepared so that we can get through the music in detail and efficiently, and I feel very well supported both by tutors and support team/management.”

Conductor

Student placements

Our student placements gave career-defining opportunities for students to gain experience and connections in music education and classical music.

12 students took part in our Tutor Experience placements at our Weeks residentials. They shadowed NCO tutors to gain experience in rehearsal planning, coaching styles, engagement and wellbeing, group dynamics and behaviour and creative composition.

25 students took part in our Insights placements, playing in our Weekends orchestras, to provide support and role-modelling, lead some sectionals, assist with child engagement, and manage group dynamics.



Musical diversity

We seek the best representation we can in the artists and musicians we work with and the music we play, to enable a greater diversity of experiences and perspectives in our programmes.

In 2025 there were:

- 5** female conductors
- 8** female composers
- 21** living composers
- 9** global majority composers
- 2** female guest artists (of 4)
- 2** global majority guest artists (of 4)
- 6** new commissions
- 1** new full orchestral arrangement



We want to remove barriers for children and adults under-represented at NCO to take part in our activities and be part of our teams. We worked with Open Up Music on their pilot of AMP Toolkit in 2025 to audit NCO's accessibility and feed into our new 3-year organisational strategy.



Audiences

A wide-angle photograph of a large orchestra performing in a modern concert hall. The hall's interior is characterized by a curved, warm-toned wooden wall and ceiling. The orchestra, consisting of many musicians in red uniforms, is seated on a raised platform. The audience, seen from behind, fills the foreground with rows of seats. The lighting is warm and focused on the stage.

**7 NCO orchestras performed
15 concerts, in Basingstoke,
Birmingham, Bolton, Bristol,
Portsmouth, Manchester,
Shrewsbury and London to
4,500 audience members.**

“The two girls at the front who were lead violinists in the first half (and one girl in the second half) were absolutely out of this world – totally sublime.”

Audience Member at
Bridgewater Hall, Manchester

Our first pre-concert workshop at The Anvil, Basingstoke sold out.

Open, excited and welcoming audiences rewarded the remarkable playing from young musicians with applause and standing ovations.

Our child-centred and child-led social media content exposed the creativity, vibrancy and inclusivity of NCO young musicians and activities.

Our most engaging piece of content was our Under 13 *Star Wars* Bassoon reel achieving 14.8K views, engaging 5,121 accounts and receiving 180 likes.

We had 6.9% more Facebook followers and 17.9% more followers on Instagram, in 2025, than in 2024.

Our YouTube channel was viewed 43,143 times in 2025, with 2,560 hours of NCO footage watched.

What do NCO musicians do next

We believe orchestral music shapes skills and hearts and we use the power of music to create supportive communities that enrich lives. The confidence, resilience and teamwork learned through music become skills for life, whether children go on to pursue a music career or to take the transferable skills into other careers and enjoy music as a hobby.

Former members of NCO have progressed on to lots of musical opportunities including that NCO alumni make up **51 out of 158** players in National Youth Orchestra 2026.

Wellbeing & environmental

Happy and healthy children

We believe everyone has their own brilliance and we craft supportive, inclusive environments in all our activities to enable them to discover their unique potential, find their voice and grow in confidence and creativity.

We also know NCO power lies in our unity – children (and grown-ups!) grow together, support each other and become something greater through the power of community.



“He had a brilliant, brilliant time on the residential. Thank you so much for helping him to feel safe and secure.”

Parent of an Orchestral Weeks member

In 2025 our programmes included:

25 hours of wellbeing sessions at residential.

This included physical fitness with Ninja Warrior **Henry Cookey**; teamwork with Commonwealth Games Gold Medalist Fencer **Claire Bennett**; injury prevention and posture with physiotherapist **Sarah Upjohn**; ergonomic use of our bodies with **Sophie Till**; mindfulness and performance coaching with **Tom Taffinder**; and connectivity with nature, movement and the world around us with **Simmy Singh**.

There were:

Online resources including **11** wellbeing videos, **2** guides and **1** webinar on looking after

body and mind, as well as **8** familiarisation documents with photos as an introduction to activity venues, and **14** online meet ups (see Online) to meet fellow orchestra members and our Support Team.

6 appreciation boxes, one for each residential, to celebrate each other, the activity or the team.

36 moments to experience an inspiring Thought for the Day.

Children told us they felt happy and encouraged by the team during their time at NCO, and that they had someone they could easily turn to if they needed support.



"Thank you for your emails before the NCO residential and for keeping an eye out for my daughter - I felt a lot more relaxed knowing she would be so well taken care of. She had an absolutely brilliant time!"

Parent of an Orchestral Weeks member

Environmental

We are committed to limiting the negative impact of our activities on our natural environment and to empowering the young people we work with to be part of making meaningful change.

We developed our *There's No Planet B* programme further this year. **10** children from our Under 13 Orchestra volunteered to do an environmental project with musician and environmentalist Simmy Singh. In the spring they took part in a mindfulness session where they explored the sounds of their natural world and how human impact changes these sounds change over time. In the summer they thought about the connection between their musical repertoire and the environment and considered how music can open up conversations. Simmy also worked with the whole orchestra during an interactive Thought for the Day.

We welcomed presenter and environmentalist Naomi Wilkinson for our *There's No Planet B* concert. Naomi worked closely with **6** musicians from the orchestra to co-present the concert for audiences at Bridgewater Hall, with Young Presenters preparing their own introductions to the pieces.

The concert programme included music from Debbie Wiseman (*Carnival of the Endangered Animals*), Rachel Portman (*Endangered*), along with Leonard Bernstein's *Slava* and Jean Sibelius' *Finlandia*.

In the interval, children from the audience created brilliant drawings inspired by what they had heard on stage.

All our Weeks and Weekends members had the opportunity to attend and interact with our *There's No Planet B* webinar (see 'Online programme') presented by Catherine Arlidge in conversation with Naomi Wilkinson and Simmy Singh.

We focussed on digital marketing wherever possible again this year and launched our new website which is hosted by B Corp and 1% for the Planet member Krystal, whose hosting is 100% renewably powered.



communications

This year, we crafted a new visual brand, new language and messaging, and developed a new website for NCO. This has given our charity a vibrant, confident and creative new identity to reflect the organisation's purpose – to champion the life-changing power of music.

Crafted with The Yard Creative, following substantial stakeholder feedback and the articulation of a new brand framework with Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, the new brand has been created by the young musicians, teams and donors at the heart of NCO. It reflects what NCO means to them and proudly states our ambition for a future where we provide more opportunities to more children, welcoming young musicians into supportive communities that enrich their lives and give them skills that endure.

Not only does the new website better reflect the full range of opportunities to get involved with NCO, but a log in area of the website for young musicians is easier to navigate, presenting resources and events to prepare for in-person activity and engage more deeply in musical learning, creativity and wellbeing.

You can read more about how our physical and digital audiences developed this year in the 'Audiences' section.

Fundraising

We were grateful to continue receiving multi-year public funding from Arts Council England in 2025 as a National Youth Music Organisation, alongside support from trusts and foundations, corporate partners and individual donors.



A significant milestone this year was the launch of NCO's rebrand and new website, which strengthened supporter communications and helped us better articulate our impact and charitable mission. Fundraising activity focused on deepening relationships and building sustainable income. Total income included £304,826 in statutory Arts Council funding, £111,300 from trusts and foundations, £25,000 in corporate sponsorship, and £24,447 in individual giving. We were grateful to receive legacy gifts from the late Margaret Gilding, a longstanding friend of NCO, and from the late Mary Cordall whose gift will be used in 2026 to support NCO percussionists as per her wishes.

In-person engagement remained a key priority, with flagship events at the Reform Club, London, and Bristol Beacon introducing NCO to new audiences, generating valuable follow-up conversations and securing new Friends. Donor receptions at concerts further supported stewardship by thanking

supporters and deepening relationships. Our trusts and foundations strategy remained rooted in the generous support of a wide range of small trusts and foundations, while beginning to explore larger, multi-year and unrestricted opportunities aligned with NCO's growth plans. We would particularly like to extend our thanks to the Cecil King Memorial Foundation for their longstanding support of our activities and public concerts and The Leverhulme Trust for their multi-year grant towards Financial Support. ABRSM renewed its corporate partnership, including the valued composer mentor programme. During the year, NCO also joined the Fundraising Regulator scheme, reinforcing our commitment to transparency, accountability and best practice.

Together, these developments provide strong foundations for the future, while continued diversification and growth of fundraising income will remain a key priority in the years ahead.

"My daughter was quite nervous going into the workshop but she came out saying that if there is ever another opportunity to attend NCO she would love to go and that it was amazing!!!"

Parent of Orchestral Days young musician

"NCO is a dream come true."

Orchestral Weeks Member

"Absolutely cannot thank the staff enough, so welcoming and encouraging of two very nervous kids who'd never participated in anything similar before. So positive, encouraging and friendly, definitely inspiring for my young musicians. Really amazing opportunity cannot recommend highly enough."

Parent of an Orchestral Days young musician



Future plans



2026 will mark the first year of NCO's 3-year growth strategy. During this period, NCO will prioritise children in state education and aims to double the number of children engaged annually by 2028.

Key developments for 2026

- Total confirmed membership for auditioned programmes in 2026 is 725, the largest number of children since 2020 and with increased representation from children in state education.
- Free, non-auditioned Orchestral Days will expand from 2 (2025) to 7 and take place in Dorset, Devon, Wiltshire, NE Somerset, Hull, Lincoln and Lancashire, in partnership with music hubs.
- Continued focus on opening access for disabled young musicians – further work to be carried out in relation to venues, communications and the role of youth voice to fully embed changes identified through the AMP toolkit research partner project with Open Up Music.
- Organist Anna Lapwood will perform as guest artist and present NCO's Under 14 Orchestra concert at Bristol Beacon on 12th April 2026 including a performance of *How to Train Your Dragon*. Wraparound concert day activity includes a 'Make your Own Dragon' Art Workshop with a Bristol artist to support family audiences in engaging with the programme.
- Audience Development project working with Horfield Primary School on Creative Composition project linking to Under 13 Orchestra *There's No Planet B* performance in Summer 2026 at Bristol Beacon.
- Side by Side performance with Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra's In Harmony musicians at the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Hall as integral part of Under 14 Orchestra concert on Saturday 1st August.
- Musical performance by 6 NCO alumni at an event at 11 Downing Street hosted by the Association of British Orchestras, raising NCO's profile and the important role of youth music in the orchestral sector.

Statement of public benefit

National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain (NCO) provides high quality orchestral training and creative musical opportunities for children aged 8–14, supporting their personal, social and musical development. Our programmes – auditioned and non auditioned – enable young people from across the UK to develop confidence, teamwork, wellbeing and artistic skills through inclusive, inspiring music making.

We ensure public benefit by offering free and/or subsidised activities, financial support schemes, and accessible pathways designed to remove barriers for children from backgrounds currently under-represented in classical music, including those from state schools, disabled young musicians and those at an early stage of their musical development. Through partnerships with schools, music hubs and music education organisations, we extend opportunities to children who might not otherwise access orchestral experiences.

The Trustees confirm that, in delivering NCO's charitable purposes during the year, they have had regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance, as required for charities in England and Wales.

Governance structure and management

Governance framework

National Children's Orchestras is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 19th February 1990 having acquired the whole of the assets, liabilities and activities of the National Children's Orchestra, being a charitable trust created by a deed of trust dated 16th August 1978. The company was set up under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the company and is governed under revised Articles of Association, adopted by the Board on 14th August 2019. The charity has no subsidiary undertakings.

The Trustees (who are also the charity's members) meet quarterly to receive management information from various areas of organisational governance and operations and to agree the strategic direction of the charity. Members meet once annually for the AGM. The Finance Committee also meet at least four times a year, prior to each Full Board Meeting, to approve and monitor financial control, reporting and authorisation systems to secure best practice standards of

project control, financial forecasting, annual budgeting and quarterly financial reporting.

During 2025 the Board reviewed the Terms of Reference for the Trust Board and the Finance Committee and the Scheme of Delegation from the Trustees to the Executive Team. Management grades reflect levels of delegated responsibility and accountability throughout the organisation. All are reviewed annually.

The day-to-day running of the charity is delegated to the Executive Team. However, there are clear areas of decision making retained by the Board (which are outlined in the charity's governance framework and policies) and established reporting frameworks to allow the Board to make these decisions effectively. NCO's policies also contain clear thresholds for reporting to the Board in areas such as Health and Safety, Data Protection, Finance and Safeguarding to facilitate robust monitoring by the charity's Trustees.

Remuneration

NCO has a remuneration policy and a set of clear pay bands for staff which is reviewed annually by the board. A review of pay levels and bands was carried out and approved by the Board in December 2025.

Alongside policy review, the Board reviews salaries on recommendation from the Chief Executive and Finance Committee in relation to % increases to be implemented from 1st January each year. The amount of any increase will be guided by CPI inflation, informal benchmarking with other arts organisations and Real Living Wage guidelines. NCO is a Real Living Wage employer.

Trustee induction and training

As with staff recruitment, National Children's Orchestras require references and DBS checks for new Trustees, in line with the charity's Safeguarding Policy and Safer Recruitment Policy. New Trustees are provided with the Safeguarding Policy, Articles of Association and Code of Conduct upon appointment.

There is a Code of Conduct specifically for Trustees. Trustee induction includes a meeting with both the Chief Executive and the Chair of the Board and the assignment of a buddy from the group of existing Trustees.

A Trustee audit was conducted in 2025. The data was used to inform a recruitment process for new Trustees following the retirement of two Trustees. This resulted in 3 new appointments to be approved at the 2026 AGM. NCO's Chair, Louise Mitchell CBE, is due to retire after 6 years service in May 2026. NCO undertook a recruitment process for her successor and a new Chair, Michael Eakin OBE, will be appointed at the 2026 AGM in May.

Risk management

The organisational risk register is reviewed quarterly by the Senior Management Team and is a standing item at each Board meeting. A specific financial risk register is similarly updated quarterly by the Finance Director and is a standing item at each Finance Committee meeting.

A Risk Management Policy collates and clarifies the charity's approach to risk management and the levels of delegated responsibility in relation to risk.

At the close of 2025 these were the four most significant risk areas:

Child Protection and Safeguarding

The Risk Management Policy cemented that the most important risk area for NCO is in relation to Child Protection and Safeguarding. The Board undertakes an annual review of safeguarding policy and practice and two Trustees have specific safeguarding responsibility. The Safeguarding Policy details appropriate levels of training provided to those who work with NCO.

A Safer Recruitment Policy was adopted by the Board in 2023. All staff and volunteers at NCO must have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

The Head of Safeguarding and Support maintains exceptional safeguarding of children and supports their wellbeing and happiness through dynamic pastoral care.

Health and Safety

There is a Health and Safety Policy in place which details control mitigations in this

area, including specifying the use of Risk Assessments and processes to be followed to ensure the safety of adults and children during activity and of staff and visitors to the office.

The Health and Safety Policy was reviewed in 2025 and the amendments were approved by the Board. A health and safety policy compliance audit was also conducted and shared with NCO's Health and Safety Lead Trustee.

Orchestra Tax Relief

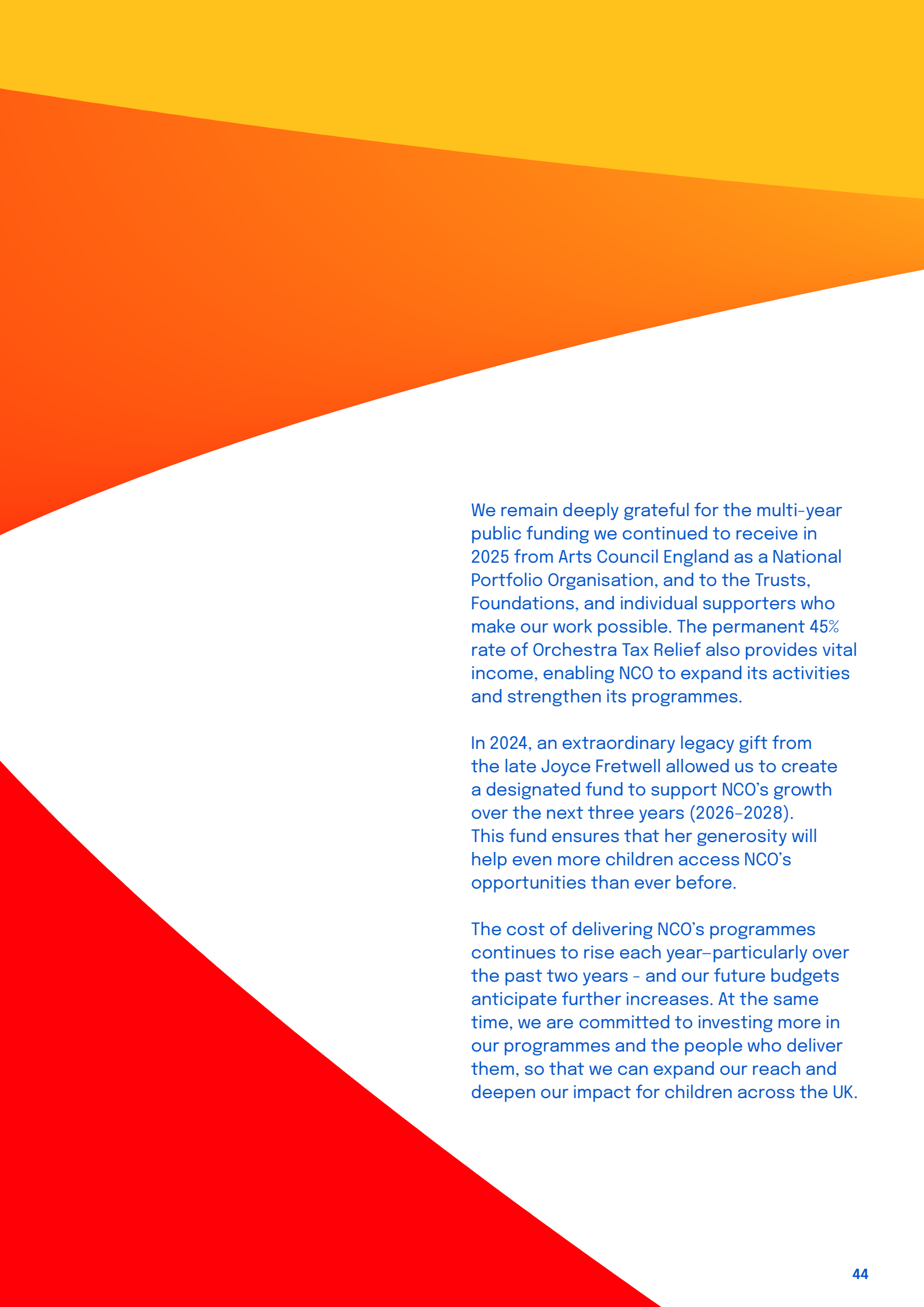
Uncertainty about the level of Orchestra Tax Relief was partly mitigated through HMT's decision in 2024 to set the level of relief at 45% permanently. This does not however guarantee this income source in the future. Financial forecasting and budgeting were completed with this risk area in mind.

Economic Factors

Inflation costs continued to be a risk area for 2025. Again, rising costs were anticipated in forward budgets and regular reforecasting exercises were undertaken by budget holders throughout the year to closely monitor the real impact of the economic landscape on the agreed budget.



Financial sustainability



We remain deeply grateful for the multi-year public funding we continued to receive in 2025 from Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation, and to the Trusts, Foundations, and individual supporters who make our work possible. The permanent 45% rate of Orchestra Tax Relief also provides vital income, enabling NCO to expand its activities and strengthen its programmes.

In 2024, an extraordinary legacy gift from the late Joyce Fretwell allowed us to create a designated fund to support NCO's growth over the next three years (2026-2028). This fund ensures that her generosity will help even more children access NCO's opportunities than ever before.

The cost of delivering NCO's programmes continues to rise each year—particularly over the past two years - and our future budgets anticipate further increases. At the same time, we are committed to investing more in our programmes and the people who deliver them, so that we can expand our reach and deepen our impact for children across the UK.

Raised Income: This is the money we raise from public and private funders consisting of Arts Council England, Trusts and Foundations, sponsorship and donations from individuals.

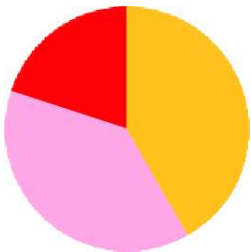
Earned Income: This is the money we receive in membership fees and concert tickets.




Interest and OTR: This is the money we receive from interest and Orchestra Tax Relief.

Charitable Activities: This is the money we spend on running our activities.

Financial Support: This is the money we spend covering all or some of the fees for families who need support.

**Income
2024**

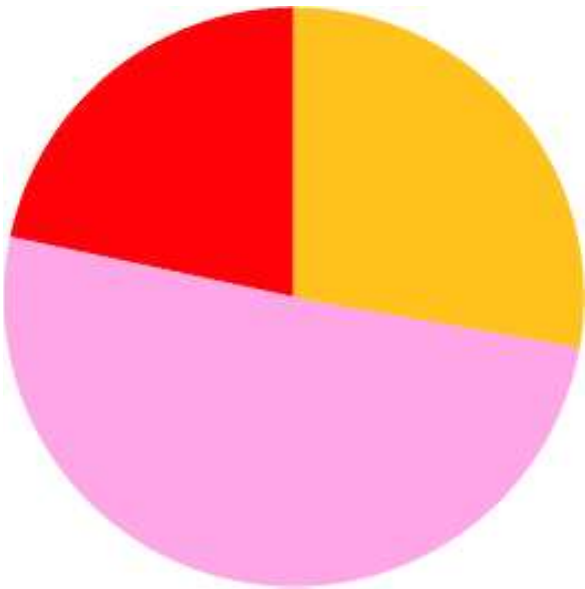


	Raised income	£836,058
	Earned income	£768,335
	Interest and OTR	£396,420
Total		£2,000,813




**Expenditure
2024**

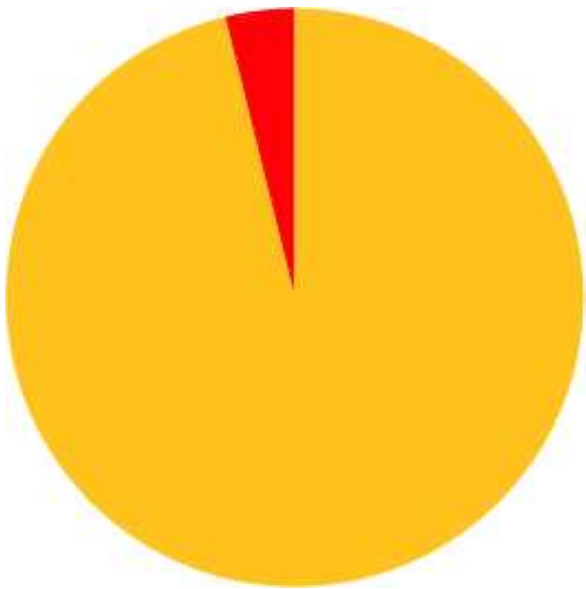


	Charitable Activities	£1,480,719
	Financial Support	£89,345
Total		£1,570,064





Income 2025

	Raised income	£469,497
	Earned income	£845,618
	Interest and OTR	£357,064
Total		£1,672,179



Expenditure 2025

	Charitable Activities	£1,631,770
	Financial Support	£63,120
Total		£1,694,890

Financial review

Financial Review

The Statement of Financial Activities for the year is set out from page 55.

Total income comprised £1,599,076 for unrestricted funds (2024: £1,918,113), £73,103 for restricted funds (2024: £82,700).

Total expenditure was £1,624,731 in unrestricted expenditure (2024: £1,471,289) and £70,159 in restricted expenditure (2024: £98,775).

As at 31st December 2025 the reserves of the charity were £1,110,975 (2024: £1,133,686) of which £280,000 are designated (2024: £446,680) and £22,425 are restricted (2024: £19,481).

Income

Total income was down by £328,634 compared to the previous year due to the large legacy gift in 2024.

NCO received £304,826 in statutory funding as a National Portfolio Organisation with support from the Arts Council of England. £111,300 was achieved through Trusts and Foundations, £23,948 in Individual Giving, and £25,000 in corporate sponsorship.

Earned income also increased by £76,357, achieved through a minimal increase in fee levels for members and box office income. The Charity benefited from £322,433 in Orchestral Tax Relief and £4,423 claim for the year in Gift Aid in the accounting period.

Expenditure

Expenditure increased by £124,826 compared to the previous year. This is due to increasing costs in relation to activity and overheads and investment in NCO's new brand and website.

Reserves policy

Unrestricted Reserves

Having reviewed the charity's reserves policy in March 2026, Trustees identified and agreed that **£700,000** should be retained in unrestricted reserves in line with expenditure and to ensure that the charity is able to continue to deliver essential services for its beneficiaries through sufficient cash reserves in line with cashflow forecasts. Future planning is fundamental to the charity's operation, combining the seasonal nature of annual activities with the necessity of planning programmes more than one year ahead. The reserves

policy reflects the need to provide a degree of security to support advance planning over longer timescales, and to provide confidence to stakeholders that plans are soundly based and funded.

Total unrestricted funds are **£737,319**, after excluding tangible assets of **£71,231**.

A further **£280,000** is held in designated funds to ensure NCO's growth strategy, designed to increase access for young musicians to take part.

Restricted Reserves

These funds are maintained through annual fundraising activities. NCO receives specific donations and grants from which only specific disbursements may be made. An explanation of each restricted reserve and the purposes for which it may be expended are given in Section 20 below. Over the next three years, NCO intends to draw down specific restricted reserves to support the charity's ongoing mission and objectives.

Going Concern

The board is mindful that NCO may continue to deploy some financial reserves to meet the challenges of the ongoing economic situation. This relates to increased costs associated with venues and suppliers driven by the inflationary pressures that continue to affect the UK economy, negatively affecting the charity's expenditure and income streams. The board expects this to

have an impact on both raised income for 2026 and programme expenditure. NCO's Board and Finance Committee will convene quarterly to review the charity's financial position and strategy. The Arts Council of England will also review any financial risk to the charity as a mandatory requirement of the NPO funding arrangement.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also directors of National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain 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 (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 charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these 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 (FRS 102);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards 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 business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company

and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and
- the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

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 reparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Auditors

Following a procurement process, BHP will be proposed for appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

2025 accounts

The 2025 accounts will be approved by the board of Trustees on Thursday 7th May and signed on its behalf by:

Louise Mitchell

L Mitchell

Independent Auditor's Report to the members and Trustees of National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain For the year ended 31st December 2025

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain for the year ended 31st December 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, cash flow statement and the related notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is 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).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31st December 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The Trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' Annual Report which includes the Directors' Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Trustees' Annual Report which includes the Directors' Report has been prepared in

accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the the Trustees' Annual Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of Trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the Trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and to take advantage of the small companies exemption in preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the Strategic Report.

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement set out on page 49, the Trustees (who are also directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditors under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with regulations made under that Act.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The specific procedures for this engagement and the extent to which these are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are detailed below.

Identifying and assessing risks related to irregularities:

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement and how fraud might occur, including through discussions with the Trustees, discussions within our audit team planning meeting, updating our record of internal controls and ensuring these controls operated as intended. We evaluated possible incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements. We identified laws and regulations that are of significance in the context of the charitable company by discussions with Trustees and updating our understanding of the sector in which the charitable company operates.

Laws and regulations of direct significance in the context of the charitable company include The Companies Act 2006, and guidance issued by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

In addition, the charity is subject to other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which may be fundamental to its ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty. These include health and safety and safeguarding for children.

Audit response to risks identified:

We considered the extent of compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures on the related financial statement items including a review of financial statement disclosures. We reviewed the charitable company's records of breaches of laws and regulations, minutes of meetings and correspondence with relevant authorities to identify potential material misstatements arising. We discussed the charitable company's policies and procedures for compliance with laws and regulations with members of management responsible for compliance.

During the planning meeting with the audit team, the engagement partner drew attention to the key areas which might involve non-compliance with laws and regulations or fraud. We enquired of management whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations or knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud. We addressed the risk of fraud through management override of controls by testing the appropriateness of journal entries and identifying any significant transactions that were unusual or outside the normal course of business. We assessed whether judgements made in making accounting estimates gave rise to a possible indication of management bias. At the completion stage of the audit, the engagement partner's review included ensuring that the team had approached their work with appropriate professional scepticism and thus the capacity to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations and fraud.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it. Also, the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Michael Strong (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Saffery LLP, Statutory Auditor

Michael Strong

Saffery LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

Date: 14/05/26
St Catherine's Court
Berkeley Place
Clifton
Bristol
BS8 1BQ

Annual Accounts 2025

Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31st December 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	3	£396,394	£73,103	£469,497	£836,058
Charitable activities	4				
Concerts		£42,239		£42,239	£42,921
Projects		£137,652		£137,652	£120,148
Membership fees		£662,119		£662,119	£602,584
Other trading activities	5	£3,608		£3,608	£2,682
Investments	6	£34,631		£34,631	£29,896
Other	7	£322,433		£322,433	£366,524
Total income		£1,599,076	£73,103	£1,672,179	£2,000,813

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
Expenditure on:					
Raising Funds	8	£125,791		£125,791	£102,256
Charitable activities	9				
Programmes (including online)		£1,311,369		£1,311,369	£1,212,521
Auditions		£31,053	£7,539	£38,592	£24,440
Concerts		£156,018		£156,018	£141,502
Bursaries and Scholarships		£500	£62,620	£63,120	£89,345
Total expenditure		£1,624,731	£70,159	£1,694,890	£1,570,064
Net income / (expenditure)		(£25,655)	£2,944	(£22,711)	£430,749
Transfer between funds	20				
Net movement in funds	20	(£25,655)	£2,944	(£22,711)	£430,749
Total Funds brought forward		£1,114,205	£19,481	£1,133,686	£702,937
Total funds carried forward	20	£1,088,550	£22,425	£1,110,975	£1,133,686

Balance Sheet

as at 31st December 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	2025 Total Funds	2024 Total Funds as Restated
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Assets	15	£71,231		£71,231	£69,448
Current Assets					
Debtors	16	£369,421		£369,421	£418,863
Investments	17	£702,579		£702,579	£448,411
Cash at Bank and in Hand		£730,885	£22,425	£753,310	£911,135
Total		£1,802,885	£22,425	£1,825,310	£1,778,409
Creditors: Amounts Falling Due Within One Year	18	(£785,566)		(£785,566)	(£714,171)
Net Current Assets		£1,017,319	£22,425	£1,039,744	£1,064,238
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities		£1,088,550	£22,425	£1,110,975	£1,133,686
Net assets		£1,088,550	£22,425	£1,110,975	£1,133,686
Restricted Funds	20			£22,425	£19,481
Unrestricted Funds	20			£1,088,550	£1,114,205
Total Charity Funds				£1,110,975	£1,133,686

The notes at pages 65 to 79 form part of these accounts

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

Approved by the Trustees on 7th May 2026

and signed on their behalf by:

Louise Mitchell

L Mitchell – Trustee

Cash flow

	Notes	2025	2024 As Restated
Cash Generated from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	£64,736	£321,539
Net cash provided by operating activities		£64,736	£321,539
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of Tangible Fixed Assets		(£3,024)	
Proceeds from Disposal of Tangible Fixed Assets			
Proceeds from Disposal of Investments			£15,838
Increase in Current Asset Investments		(£254,168)	(£448,411)
Interest Received		£34,631	£29,896
Net Cash Used in Investing Activities		(£222,561)	(£402,677)
Change in Cash and Cash Equivalents in the Reporting Period	2	(£157,825)	(£81,138)
Cash and Cash Equivalents at the Beginning of the Reporting Period		£911,135	£992,273
Cash and Cash Equivalents at the End of the Reporting Period		£753,310	£911,135

Notes to the cash flow statement

1. Reconciliation of net income/(expenditure) to net cash flow from operating activities

		2025	2024
Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		(£22,711)	£430,749
Adjustments for:			
Depreciation Charges		£1,241	£772
Interest Received		(£34,631)	(£29,896)
(Increase)/Decrease in Debtors		£49,442	(£101,797)
Increase in Creditors		£71,395	£21,711
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		£64,736	£321,539

2. Analysis of changes in net funds

		At 1st January 2025 As Restated	Cash Flow	At 31st December 2025
Net Cash				
Cash at Bank and in Hand		£911,135	(£157,825)	£753,310
Total		£911,135	(£157,825)	£753,310

Accounting policies

1. Statutory information

National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain is a charitable company limited by guarantee and domiciled in England and Wales. The Charity is registered in England and Wales, Registered Company number 2471385, Registered Charity number 803026. The registered office and principal office is Unit 2.3, Streamline, 436-441 Paintworks, Arncliffe, Leeds, LS16 5PP.

The principal activity of the Charity is to foster and develop the early musical talent of children aged between 8 and 14 years from across the UK, providing world-class opportunities for orchestral training and performance.

2. Accounting policies

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception of investments and musical instruments which are included at market value. The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £1.

Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102 and SORP (FRS 102) the financial reporting standards applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland and Companies Act 2006.

Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In the application of the Charity's accounting policies which are described above, 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 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 described below.

Depreciation

Assets are written down over their estimated useful lives. The actual lives of the assets may differ from these estimates. The lives of the assets are kept under review and adjusted as appropriate.

Valuation of musical instruments

Musical instruments are carried at an estimation of their market value, based upon external valuations and the judgement of the Trustees.

Allocation of costs between activities

As a small charity many costs incurred, including staff time, cover more than one activity. These costs are allocated to activities based on the key cost drivers and best estimates of staff time on each activity.

Going concern

The Trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern basis is appropriate and have considered possible events or conditions that might cast significant doubt on the ability of the charitable entity to continue as a going concern. The Trustees have made this assessment for a period of at least one year from the date of approval of the financial statements. The Trustees have concluded that there is a reasonable expectation that the charitable entity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, and there are no material uncertainties. The charitable entity therefore continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing its financial statements.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

In particular:

Donations are recognised when the amount of the donation is known and the receipt of funds is probable.

Income from government and other grants is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions are met, the amount can be measured reliably, and in line with the timing implied by any multi-period grant agreements.

Legacies are recognised when the amount is known with reasonable certainty and the receipt of funds is probable. This may be earlier than the date of receipt of funds where appropriate notification has been received from those dealing with the estate.

Membership income is recognised in the accounting year the membership relates to. Any advance payments of membership are deferred to the period to which they relate.

Income from Concerts and Projects is recognised once the event has taken place. Any advance payments are deferred.

Income from trading activities is recognised upon sale of the associated merchandise.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Grants relate to bursaries and scholarships for attending the courses run by the Charity. Where a member of the Orchestra awarded a grant does not attend, the associated grant is cancelled.

Allocation and apportionment of costs

Costs are allocated to the different activities of the charity on an actual basis where possible. Where costs incurred relate to a number of activities these are apportioned on the basis of time spent on those activities.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Music – 20% on cost

Fixtures and fittings – 20% on cost

Fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation.

Items purchased for less than £200 are not capitalised and are expensed through the Statement of Financial Activities.

Musical instruments

Musical instruments are held at valuation and are not depreciated. These are revalued every five years with movements in the market value being taken to the Statement of Financial Activities in the year of revaluation. Individual instruments valued at less than £200 each are written off.

Taxation

National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain is registered as a Charity with the Charity Commission under number 803026. Because of its charitable status, National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain is exempt from United Kingdom taxation on its surplus income and capital gains.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the Trustees.

Restricted funds can be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the charitable company's pension scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

Trade and other debtors

Trade and other debtors that are receivable within one year and do not constitute a financing transaction are recorded at the undiscounted amount expected to be received, net of any impairment.

Those that are receivable after more than one year or constitute a financing transaction are recorded initially at fair value less transaction costs and subsequently at amortised costs, net of impairment.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash at bank and in hand, demand deposits with banks and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less and bank overdrafts. In the balance sheet, bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings or current liabilities.

Trade and other creditors

Trade and other creditors are initially recognised at the transaction price and are thereafter stated at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the effect of discounting would be immaterial, in which case they are stated at cost.

Current asset investments

Current asset investments comprise demand deposits with banks with maturities of over three months.

Notes

3	Donations and Legacies		2025	2024
	Donations		£159,203	£193,814
	Legacy Income		£1,045	£337,308
	Government Grants		£304,826	£300,002
	Tax Recovered		£4,423	£4,934
			£469,497	£836,058
	The charity received government grants, defined as funding from Arts Council England (and in 2024 also the Department for Education) to fund charitable activities. The total value of such grants in the year ended 31st December 2025 was £304,826 (2024: £300,002). There are no unfulfilled conditions or contingencies attaching to these grants.			
4	Income from Charitable Activities		2025	2024
	Concert Income		£42,239	£42,921
	Projects Income		£137,652	£120,148
	Membership Fees		£662,119	£602,584
			£842,010	£765,653
5	Other Trading Activities		2025	2024
	Other Revenue		£3,608	£2,682
			£3,608	£2,682
6	Investment Income		2025	2024
	Investment Income		£34,631	£29,896
			£34,631	£29,896

Notes

7	Other Income		2025	2024
	Orchestra Tax Relief		£322,433	£366,524
			£322,433	£366,524
8	Raising Funds		2025	2024
	Raising Donations and Legacies			
	Staff Costs		£111,860	£91,501
	Other Costs		£13,931	£10,755
			£125,791	£102,256

9	Charitable Activities Costs	Direct Costs	Grant Funding of Activities (See note 10)	Support Costs (See note 11)	Totals 2025
	Programmes (including online)	£650,625		£660,744	1,311,369
	Auditions	£38,592			£38,592
	Concerts	£156,018			£156,018
	Bursaries and Scholarships	£700.00	£62,420		£63,120
		£845,935	£62,420	£660,744	£1,569,099
	Prior Year	Direct Costs	Grant Funding of Activities (See note 10)	Support Costs (See note 11)	Totals 2024
	Programmes (including online)	£619,370		£593,151	£1,212,521
	Auditions	£24,440			£24,440
	Concerts	£141,502			£141,502
	Bursaries and Scholarships	£701	£88,644		£89,345
		£786,013	£88,644	£593,151	£1,467,808

Notes

10	Grants Payable		2025	2024
	Bursaries and Scholarships		£62,420	£88,644
	The total grants paid to individuals during the year was as follows:			
	Grant		£62,420	£88,644
	All grants relate to bursaries provided to individuals as a subsidy towards their membership fees and travel costs.			

11	Support Costs		Management	Governance	Totals 2025
	Programmes (including online)		£604,801	£55,943	£660,744
			£604,801	£55,943	£660,744
			Management	Governance	Totals 2024
	Programmes (including online)		£542,726	£50,425	£593,151
			£542,726	£50,425	£593,151

12	Net Income/Expenditure		2025	2024
	Net income/ (expenditure) is stated after charging:			
	Auditor' Remuneration		£12,960	£11,640
	Auditor's Remuneration for non audit work		£3,360	£3,180
	Depreciation - Owned Assets		£1,214	£772

Notes

13	Trustees' Remuneration and Benefits			
	There were no Trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31st December 2025 nor for the year ended 31st December 2024, except as disclosed in Note 23.			
	Trustees' Expenses			
	Trustees' expenses in respect of attendance at board meetings during the year totalled £162 (2024: £186).			
14	Staff Costs		2025	2024
	Wages and Salaries		£454,671	£417,361
	Social Security Costs		£42,993	£34,482
	Pension Costs		£10,309	£8,877
			£507,973	£460,720
	The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:		2025	2024
			15	15
	There was one employee whose total employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) were between £60,000 – £70,000 (2024: one).			
	The Orchestras employed 193 freelancers during the year (2024: 183), who worked a total of 2,100 days (2024: 1,863 days).			
	The support team provide pastoral support for the members of the Orchestras, whilst tutors help with the musical elements. These freelancers are paid on a per session basis.			

Notes

15	Tangible Fixed Assets		Music	Instruments	Fixtures and Fittings	Totals
	Cost					
	At 1st January 2025		£21,720	£169,850	£75,453	£267,023
	Additions				£3,024	£3,024
	Disposals					
	At 31st December 2025		£21,720	£169,850	£78,477	£270,047
	Depreciation & Impairment					
	At 1st January 2025		£21,720	£102,325	£73,530	£197,575
	Charge for the Year				£1,241	£1,241
	Eliminated on Disposals					
	At 31st December 2025		£21,720	£102,325	£74,771	£198,816
	Net Book Value					
	At 31st December 2025			£67,525	£3,706	£71,231
	At 31st December 2024			£67,525	£1,923	£69,448
	External valuations were obtained for the musical instruments in 2021, that totalled £67,525. It is the opinion of the Trustees that there has been no material movement to the value of the instruments since the external valuations were obtained, up to the 31st December 2025 year end.					

Notes

16	Debtors: Amounts Falling Due Within One Year		2025	2024
	Trade Debtors		£5,646	£4,797
	Prepayments and Accrued Income		£37,134	£38,247
	Tax Recoverable		£326,641	£375,819
			£369,421	£418,863
17	Current Asset Investments		2025	2024 As Restated
	Amounts Held on Deposit with Maturities Over 3 Months		£702,579	£448,411
			£702,579	£448,411
18	Creditors: Amounts Falling due Within One Year		2025	2024
	Trade Creditors		£21,689	£3,190
	Social Security and Other Taxes		£2,014	£1,854
	Deferred Income		£734,749	£677,822
	Accruals		£27,114	£31,305
			£785,566	£714,171
	Further information on deferred income is provided in note 24.			
19	Leasing Agreements			
	Minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases fall due as follows:		2025	2024
	Within One Year		£8,848	£11,185
	Between One and Five Years			
			£8,848	£11,185
	Lease payments recognised as an expense in the year amounted to £46,364 (2024: £45,636).			

Notes

20	Movement in Funds		At 1/1/25	Net Movement in Funds	Transfers Between Funds	At 31/12/25
	Unrestricted Funds					
	General Fund		£667,525	£27,345	£113,680	£808,550
	Unrestricted - Designated Funds					
	Rebranding Reserve		£53,000	(£53,000)		
	Risk Reserve		£210,000		(£210,000)	
	Organisational Development		£183,680		£96,320	£280,000
			£1,114,205	(£25,655)		£1,088,550
	Restricted Funds					
	Bursary Fund			£13,075		£13,075
	E Rorison Winter Award		£3,631	(£200)		£3,431
	Access and Progression		£7,539	(£9,931)		(£2,392)
	Vivienne Price Memorial Fund		£8,311			£8,311
			£19,481	£2,944		£22,425
	Total Funds		£1,133,686	(£22,711)		£1,110,975
	Net Movement in Funds, included in the above are as follows:					
			Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Gains and Losses	Movement in Funds
	Unrestricted Funds					
	General Fund		£1,599,076	(£1,571,731)		£27,345
	Unrestricted - Designated Funds					
	Rebranding Reserve			(£53,000)		(£53,000)

Notes

			Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Gains and Losses	Movement in Funds
	Risk Reserve					
	Organisational Development					
			£1,599,076	(£1,624,731)		(£25,655)
	Restricted Funds					
	Bursary Fund		£73,103	(£60,028)		£13,075
	E Rorison Winter Award			(£200)		(£200)
	Access and Progression			(£9,931)		(£9,931)
	Vivienne Price Memorial Fund					
			£73,103	(£70,159)		£2,944
	Total Funds		£1,672,179	(£1,694,890)		(£22,711)
	Comparatives for Movement in Funds					
			At 1/1/24	Net Movement in Funds	Transfers Between Funds	At 31/12/24
	Unrestricted Funds					
	General Fund		£410,165	£467,704	(£210,344)	£667,525
	Unrestricted - Designated Funds					
	Rebranding Reserve		£47,216	(£20,880)	£26,664	£53,000
	Risk Reserve		£210,000			£210,000
	Organisational Development				183,680	£183,680
			£667,381	£446,824		£1,114,205

Notes

			At 1/1/24	Net Movement in Funds	Transfers Between Funds	At 31/12/24
	Restricted Funds					
	Bursary Fund			(£5,944)	£5,944	
	E Rorison winter award		£3,831	(£200)		£3,631
	Access and Progression		£17,470	(£9,931)		£7,539
	Vivienne Price memorial fund		£14,255		(£5,944)	£8,311
			£35,556	(£16,075)		£19,481
	Total Funds		£702,937	£430,749		£1,133,686
	Comparative net movement of funds included in the above are as follows:					
			Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Gains and Losses	Movement in Funds
	Unrestricted Funds					
	General Fund		£1,918,113	(£1,450,409)		£467,704
	Unrestricted - Designated Funds					
	Rebranding Reserve			(£20,880)		(£20,880)
	Risk Reserve					
			£1,918,113	(£1,471,289)		£446,824
	Restricted Funds					
	Bursary Fund		£82,700	(£88,644)		(£5,944)
	E Rorison Winter Award			(£200)		(£200)
	Access and Progression			(£9,931)		(£9,931)
			£82,700	(98,775)		(16,075)
	Total Funds		£2,000,813	(1,570,064)		£430,749

Notes

Unrestricted Reserves

Please refer to P48

Restricted Funds

Please refer to P48

Bursary Fund

This fund is maintained through annual fundraising activities. NCO receives specific donations from which only bursary payments may be made. Distributions are made annually to support the membership of children from lower income families who might otherwise not be able to take up their places. As well as contributions to all or part of orchestra membership fees, financial assistance is also available towards the costs of travelling to orchestral activities and for NCO clothing. Awards are made against a sliding scale on the basis of annual household income. Applications are scrutinised, and awards made, by an internal NCO panel. The NCO Board regularly reviews bursary expenditure and scales to ensure that NCO is offering as much help as fundraising allows.

E Rorison Winter Award

Elizabeth Rorison, a former Trustee of NCO, bequeathed £5,000 towards an annual winter concert award.

Access and Progression

This fund represents money received to support the engagement activities.

Notes

Vivienne Price Memorial Fund

This fund has been established through donations made to NCO in memory of Vivienne Price MBE, NCO's Founding Patron, and the proceeds of a 'Grade-One-athon' fundraising activity undertaken by NCO tutors, Trustees and staff during 2015. The proceeds will be distributed over time at the discretion of the Artistic Director and Principal Conductor towards: scholarships for children who might not otherwise be able to take up their places, an annual prize to a member of Under 13 Orchestra, and the purchase of musical equipment for the general benefit of current and future members of NCO orchestras.

Transfers between funds

The transfers between funds in the prior year represents the contribution from restricted funds towards core activities of the charity and the purchase of fixed assets, as agreed by the donor, for use in core activities.

Analysis of net assets between funds						
			Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total
	Year to 31st December 2025					
	Tangible Fixed Assets		£71,231			£71,231
	Net Current Assets		£737,319	£280,000	£22,425	£1,039,744
	Total Funds		£808,550	£280,000	£22,425	£1,110,975

			Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total
	Year to 31st December 2024					
	Tangible Fixed Assets		£69,448			£69,448
	Net Current Assets		£598,077	£446,680	£19,481	£1,064,238
	Total Funds		£667,525	£446,680	£19,481	£1,133,686

Notes

21	Employee Benefit Obligations				
	Pension contributions amounting to £10,309 (2024: £8,877) were recognised as an expense in the SoFA in respect of the Charity's defined contribution pension scheme. These costs are charged in full to unrestricted funds.				
22	Contingent Liabilities				
	The client has an obligation under their rental lease to make good the property at the end of the lease. No provision has been made for this liability as the cost cannot be reliably quantified.				
23	Related Party Disclosures				
	During the year a number of the Trustees made donations to the Charity, these were made without condition.				
	During the year 1 Trustee, L Stott, was paid a total of £450 (2024: £313) for services as a tutor. The fees paid were in line with those paid to other tutors and freelancers providing similar services to the Charity.				

24	Deferred income		2025	2024
	Accruals and deferred income includes the following items of income which have been deferred as at 31st December 2025:			
	Membership deferred at 1st January 2025		£677,822	£644,130
	Released to income in the year		(£677,822)	(£644,130)
	Grant funding received in advance			
	Membership deferred at 31st December 2025		£734,749	£677,822
			£734,749	£677,822
	Membership relates to the calendar year, places are awarded at the end of the previous year and fees are often received in advance of the start of that year. In accordance with the accounting policy, membership income received in relation to the following year is deferred.			

Notes

25	Post balance sheet events			
	The Trustees have no post balance sheet events to report.			
26	Prior Period Adjustments			
	Changes to the Balance Sheet	As Previously Reported	Adjustment	As Restated at 31st Dec 2024
	Current Assets			
	Current Asset Investments		£448,411	£448,411
	Cash at Bank and in Hand	£1,359,546	(£448,411)	£911,135
	Net Assets	£1,133,686		£1,133,686
	Total Charity Funds	£1,133,686		£1,133,686
	During the audit of the financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2025, it was identified that current asset investments amounting to £448,411 had been incorrectly classified as cash and cash equivalents in the prior year's financial statements as at 31st December 2024. This error arose due to a misclassification of asset classes.			
	The investments related to deposits held in fixed-term accounts with maturities of over 3 months. In accordance with FRS 102, such deposits do not meet the definition of cash equivalents.			
	The comparative figures have been restated accordingly. The correction has no impact on the total net assets or deficit for the year ended 31st December 2024.			

Notes

27	Comparatives for the statement of financial activities			
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds
	Income and Endowments from			
	Donations and Legacies	£753,358	£82,700	£836,058
	Charitable Activities			
	Concerts	£42,921		£42,921
	Projects	£120,148		£120,148
	Membership Fees	£602,584		£602,584
	Other Trading Activities	£2,682		£2,682
	Investment Income	£29,896		£29,896
	Other Income	£366,524		£366,524
	Total	£1,918,113	£82,700	£2,000,813
	Expenditure on			
	Raising Funds	£102,256		£102,256

Notes

		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds
	Charitable Activities			
	Programmes (including online)	£1,212,521		£1,212,521
	Auditions	£14,509	£9,931	£24,440
	Concerts	£141,502		£141,502
	Bursaries and Scholarships	£501	£88,844	£89,345
	Total	£1,471,289	£98,775	£1,570,064
	Net Income/(Expenditure)	£446,824	(£16,075)	£430,749
	Transfers Between Funds			
	Net Movement in Funds	£446,824	(£16,075)	£430,749
	Total Funds Brought Forward	£667,381	£35,556	£702,937
	Total Funds Carried Forward	£1,114,205	£19,481	£1,133,686

**Thank
yous**

Thank you

Trustees

Alison Mears
Alistair Butt
Beth Higham-Edwards
Christine Wu
Clare Jack
George Caird
Kadiatu Kanneh-Mason
Letty Stott
Louise Mitchell (Chair)
Lucy Maguire
Roger Tomlinson
Sophie Jerrold
Stuart Burns
Uchenna Ngwe

Thanks also to Trustees who have retired from our board during this year:

Jonathan Mayes (Deputy Chair) and **William Norris**

Administrative Staff

Sophie Lewis
Chief Executive
Becky Cresswell
Communications Director
Charlotte Taras
Communications Manager
Abby Capern
Communications Assistant
Tammy Daly
Programme and Orchestras Director

Andrew Thompson
Programme and Orchestras Manager

Olivia Jollands
Programme and Orchestras Manager

Hannah Findlater
Programme and Orchestras Administrator

Katie Axelson
Music Librarian

Alice Morrison
Development Director

Sarah Freeman
Head of Development

Tamsin Oldham
Head of Engagement

Siobainn Chaplin
Head of Safeguarding and Support

Beth Mackenzie
Head of Business Administration

Thanks also to colleagues who have moved on to new adventures during this year:

Catherine Arlidge and **Jessica Hill.**

Freelance team

Music Tutors

Abi Hyde-Smith
Aisling Palmer
Aisling Reilly
Alex Willett

Amy Thomas
Andres Yauri
Anna Caban
Anna Vaughan
Andy Wilson
Anthony Bailey
Anton Clarke-Butler
Arlene MacFarlane
Bindi McFarlane
Bryony Mycroft
Catherine Handley
Catrin Win Morgan
Catriona McDermid
Chris Augustine
Chris Barrett
Chris Beagles
Claire Hasted
Clare Thompson
Connie Tanner
David Munn
Elen Hydref
Elfair Grug
Elsa Bradley
Emma Purslow
Francesca Moore-Bridger
Fraser Gordon
Gabi Swallow
Gabriella Dall'Olio
Hayley Wild
Heidi Bennett
Helen Brew
Helen Edgar
Helen Kuby
Henry Roberts
Ian Forgrieve
Jacqueline Phillips
Jenny Weir
Jim Maynard

Thank you

Jo Bradley

Jo Lively

Joanne Green

Jonathan Trim

Josh Salter

Julian Atkinson

Kath Gittings

Kesari Pundarika

Kirsty Matheson

Liz Fyfe

Liz Trigg

Louise Braithwaite

Lynn Henderson

Marged Hall

Meadow Brookes

Mariella Bromfield

Matt Bain

Matt Palmer

May Halyburton

Melanie Martin

Melanie Rothman

Neil Fulton

Nico Bricht

Owen Cox

Rachel Holt

Rachel Wick

Richard Shrewsbury

Richard Steggall

Robyn Lund

Roisin Ni Dhuill

Ruby Aspinall

Ruby Orłowska

Ryan Linham

Sally O'Brien

Sally-Ann Anderson

Sam Kinrade

Sophie Roper

Sophie Simpson

Sue Baxendale

Tim Barber

Tom Highnam

Veronica Urrego

Vicky Lee

Zoe Matthews

Conductors

Adam Gibbs

Andy Morley

Caroline Hobbs-Smith

Dominic Wheeler

Greg Beardsell

Helen Harrison

Jack Ridley

Jonathan Trim

Matthew Quinn

Natalia Luis-Bassa

Rebecca Miller

Veronica Urrego

Creative Leads

Delia Stevens

Ed Babar

Georgina Aasgaard

Jonathan James

Raph Clarkson

Wellbeing Leads

Claire Bennett

Henry Cooley

Sarah Upjohn

Sophie Till

Tom Taffinder

Support Managers & Assistant Support Managers

Alexander Leadbeater

Brian Weir

Charlotte Hill

Dave Muncey

Elizabeth O'Neill

Emily Stephens

James Fisher

Support Team

Aaron Pring

Adam Al-Naisiri

Aidan Campbell

Alex Boyd-Bench

Alex Gray

Anna Gambrill

Asher Penny

Benedict King

Charlie Hodge

Edward Hyde

Ee Ann Ho

Eleanor Hall

Faith Stonehewer

George Hillier

Grace Harman

Hannah Seymour

Harry Appleby-Taylor

Holly Payne

Iona Griffiths

Isabel Thompson

Jodie Mitson

Josephine Connor

Joshua Cusworth

Kathryn Titcomb

Katy Harrison

Katie Macdonald

Thank you

Kezia Elliot
Klara Sweeney
Leo Schartz
Louis Benneyworth
Lucy Heppel
Lucy Keeley
Lucy Little
Maisie Veitch
Marcus Leung
Matthew Sutton
Melissa Doody
Mikey Lowe
Nadia Wilson
Nick Williams
Rebekah Clarke
Rhiannon Bedford
Roisin Craney
Sabrina Ko
Sam Hill
Sam Holburt
Sam Middleton
Sarah Chew
Steph Yim
Susanna Alsey
Thomas Judge
Toby Johnson-Jones

Instrument Support

Callum Davis
David Wheeler
Edward Simons
George Brady
Hannah Spry
Jordan Kinsey
Milly Deering
Toby Johnson-Jones
Torbin Collier

Orchestra Managers, Assistant Orchestra Managers & Concert Managers

Alex Tighe
Liz Dixon
Mary Owens
Rebecca Coleman

Guest Artists

Chris Augustine
Carol Jarvis
Katy Jones
Nate Holder

Webinar & Concert Guests / Presenters

Alicia Li-Yan-Hui
Anna Lapwood
Carol Jarvis
Chris Augustine
Jamaal Kashim
Linton Stephens
Naomi Wilkinson
Simmy Singh

Nurses

Joanna Carnegie
Karen Lang
Kate Hollis
Sam Young

Thank you

We would like to thank our wonderful supporters, partners, and Friends and Patrons, as listed below, for their extraordinary support towards our 2025 programme. Their generous donations, grants, sponsorships and encouragement enables what we do. To each of you – we could not do it without you. Thank you.

Supporters



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

Sponsor

ABRSM

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Anonymous

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Edward Cadbury Charitable Trust
GC Gibson Charitable Trust
The Golsoncott Foundation
Harrison-Frank Family Foundation**

John Thaw Foundation

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The Marsh Trust
The Mary Robertson Trust
Misses Barrie Charitable Trust
Mrs Pat Ripley's Charitable Trust
PF Charitable Trust
Three Monkeys Trust
Universal Music Sound Foundation
Veronica Awdry Charitable Trust**

Families

We are so grateful for the generosity and support shown to us in donations from NCO families this year. Thank you.

Thank you

Partners

NCO is deepening existing partnerships and developing further collaborations across the UK to support a greater diversity of children, young musicians and their families to engage with NCO.

We are committed to providing and supporting access to music making and concerts and look forward to continuing existing and developing new relationships with: ABRSM, Association of British Orchestras, Birmingham Conservatoire, Bradford Music & Arts Service, Bolton Music Service (GMMH), Bristol Beacon, Devon Music Education Hub, Future Talent, In Harmony, Hull Music Hub, Lancashire Music Hub, Lincolnshire Music Hub, Music Mark, Music Masters, Music for Youth, Nucleo, our fellow National Youth Music Organisations, One Education Manchester (GMMH), Open Up Music, Royal Northern College of Music, West of England Music & Arts, Wessex Music, Wiltshire Music Centre, Young Sounds UK.

Friends and Patrons

Thank you to our dedicated supporters for their regular donations through NCO's Friends and Patrons scheme. They are:

Principal Patrons

Anonymous Donor

Howard & Celia Gough

Patrons

**Anthony &
Stella Capo Bianco
Louise Mitchell**

Forte Friends

**John Bradley
Nina Kaye &
Timothy Nathan
Andrew Kemble
Jean Marsh
Robert Mitchell
William O'Farrell
Paul & Alison Richards**

Crescendo Friends

**Alan Clarkson
Jonathan Dimpleby
Michael Ferraro
Melanie Haydon
Gillian Kemble
Chris Lamb
Dr Alison Leaf
Sophie & Simon Lewis
Kathy & Vince Ludlow
Jonathan Mayes
David Stride**

Clare Thompson

Moira Usher

Brian & Jennifer Weir

The Wyer Family

Pianissimo Friends

**Stuart Burns
Mary Cordall
Sarah Freeman
Drs R & B Grover
Eun Jung Ha
Jane & Timothy Harries
Fiona Harvey
Beth Higham-Edwards
Geoffrey Hirst
John & Diana Lampen
J Pont
William Norris
Annabel Noton
Jenna & Hugh Robinson
Michael Ruffle
Peter Stark
Harry & Nicky Yoxall**

Special Thanks

We were touched to receive a Legacy Gift this year from **Margaret Gilding**, who was a dedicated, long-term supporter of NCO, and friend of our founder Vivienne Price. We were so sorry to hear of her passing and will be sure to put her kind gift to the best possible use in her memory. We were also so grateful to receive a legacy from the late **Mary Cordall** whose gift will be used in 2026 to support NCO percussionists as per her wishes.

Charity information

Trustees

Louise Mitchell

(Chair)

Alistair Butt

(appointed 6th May 2025)

Stuart Burns

George Caird

Beth Higham-Edwards

Clare Jack

(appointed 6th May 2025)

Sophie Jerrold

(appointed 6th May 2025)

Kadiatu Kanneh-Mason

Lucy Maguire

Jonathan Mayes

(Vice Chair, retired 13th Sept 2025)

Alison Mears Esswood

Uchenna Ngwe

William Norris

(retired 13th Sept 2025)

Laetitia Stott

Roger Tomlinson

Christine Wu

Finance Committee

Members

Stuart Burns

Alistair Butt

(appointed 6th May 2025)

Clare Jack

(appointed 6th May 2025)

Jonathan Mayes

(retired 13th Sept 2025)

William Norris

(retired 13th Sept 2025)

Roger Tomlinson

Christine Wu

Founder

Vivienne Price MBE

Executive Team

Sophie Lewis

- Chief Executive

Catherine Arlidge

- MBE Artistic and Educational Director
(resigned March 2025)

Auditors

Saffery LLP

St Catherine's Court

Berkeley Place

Clifton

Bristol

BS8 1BQ

Bankers

Lloyds TSB Bank PLC

64 High Street

Epsom

Surrey

KT19 8AT

Charity information

The Trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st December 2025.

The Trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1st January 2019).

National Children's Orchestras

Unit 2.3, Streamline
436-441 Paintworks
Arnos Vale
Bristol
BS4 3AS

www.nco.org.uk

Registered Charity Number:

803026

Registered Company Number:

2471385 (England and Wales)



@nco_gb



@ncogb



@National Childrens Orchestras

Photos by Vernon Nash, Paul Blakemore, Mark Allan, Joey Moxley and Chris Payne

Film by Joey Moxley

Report Design by The Yard Creative

Signature: Louise Mitchell
Louise Mitchell (May 8, 2026 12:06:37 GMT+1)
Email: louise@louisemitchell.org

Signature: Michael Strong
Michael Strong (May 14, 2026 14:39:45 GMT+1)
Email: alexandra.momtahan@saffery.com











260415_NCO_Trustee Annual Report_compressed

Final Audit Report

2026-05-14

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National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain

Audit closing report to the
Trustees

For the year ended 31 December 2025

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The matters raised in this report are only those which have come to our attention arising from or relevant to our audit that we believe need to be brought to your attention. They are not a comprehensive record of all the matters arising and, in particular, we cannot be held responsible for reporting all risks in your business or all internal control weaknesses. This report has been prepared solely for your use and should not be quoted in whole or in part without our prior written consent. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the report has not been prepared for, and is not intended for, any other purpose.

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Executive summary

This report sets out the key matters arising from the work that we have carried out in respect of the financial statements of National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain ('the Charity') for the year ended 31 December 2025. This report addresses the following matters:



Audit status and approach

Our audit has been carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing ('ISAs') (UK) as adopted by the Financial Reporting Council ('FRC'). The audit is complete and we have issued an unmodified audit opinion.

Key audit risks

As set out in our Audit Strategy Report we identified the following significant risks where we expected to focus our audit work:

- Risk of material misstatement arising from management override of controls
- Risk of material misstatement arising from revenue recognition

We also set out other risks we addressed as part of our audit procedures:

- Risk of going concern status from adherence to relevant laws and regulations
- Risk of material misstatement arising from the valuation of instruments

We set out in this section our conclusions regarding these key risks.

Other significant audit and accounting matters

We have also addressed the following additional matters upon which we will report:

- Review of accounting policies
- Changes to accounting policies
- Accounting for and disclosure of significant and unusual transactions
- Significant estimates and areas of judgement
- Financial statement disclosures
- Other significant matters



Evaluation of misstatements

In accordance with ISA (UK) 450 *Evaluation of misstatements identified during the audit* we are required to report all misstatements in the draft financial statements which management have not corrected, other than those that are 'clearly trivial'. We consider the impact of any identified misstatements in the financial statement disclosures.

Accounting and internal control systems

We have documented and tested the internal control systems only to the extent that it is necessary for us to complete our audit work. Our work does not constitute a full test of the controls and is not designed to identify all deficiencies or issues that may exist. However, we highlight in this report any significant deficiencies that we have noted throughout the course of our audit.

Auditor independence and objectivity

We reconfirm our assessment of the threats to our independence and that we have complied with the requirements on objectivity and independence.

Looking forward

We consider:

- Forthcoming changes to accounting and auditing standards
- Any other regulatory or legislative changes
- Planning for the next financial year
- Any other relevant issues that may affect your financial statements or business

Audit status and approach



Outstanding matters

We have completed our audit and there are no outstanding matters.

We have issued an unmodified opinion on the financial statements.

Audit approach

We completed our audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) as adopted by the FRC. Our audit work was carried out in accordance with our Audit Strategy Report as sent to you on 2 February 2026 and in response to the perceived audit risks, and no reasons or issues were identified which required us to change our approach and no additional risks were identified.

In our Audit Strategy Report we presented detail on our approach to setting materiality.

Planning materiality was set at £50,000 and performance materiality was set at £45,000, based upon the income levels for the year. We used draft accounts to determine these materiality levels. (Please refer to the Audit Strategy Report for description of planning and performance materiality.) We reassessed materiality at the completion stage and concluded that it remained appropriate as initially determined.

Key audit risks and conclusions on key audit matters

During our audit planning we identified the following significant risks. Significant risks are identified and assessed risks of material misstatement that, in our judgement, require special audit consideration.



Risk of material misstatement arising from management override of controls



Description and audit approach

Management override of controls and accounting records is a key consideration in all audits, and the risk of this is present in all entities. We have performed the following procedures including:

- Made inquiries of individuals involved in the financial reporting process
- Discussed with management how they identify transactions or other events that give rise to the need for accounting estimates
- Assessed the appropriateness of journal entries testing a sample of such entries, using data analytics to identify unusual journals for further review

- Reviewed accounting estimates for susceptibility to misstatement due to management bias or fraud
- Performed a retrospective review of management judgements and assumptions relating to accounting estimates recorded in the prior year
- Evaluated the business rationale for significant transactions outside the normal course of business

Conclusion

We have not identified any material misstatement arising from management override of controls or the posting of journals.

Risk of material misstatement arising from revenue recognition



Description and audit approach

Under ISA (UK) 240 The Auditor's Responsibilities Relating to Fraud in an Audit of Financial Statements revenue recognition is a presumed risk.

We have performed the following procedures including:

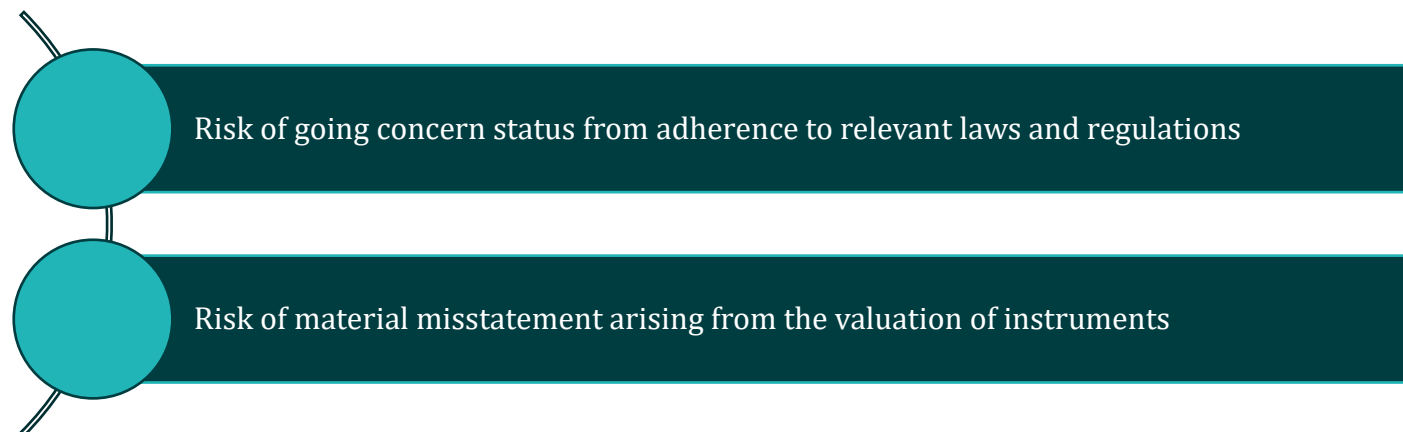
- Performed a detailed analytical review of all revenue streams
- Performed substantive testing of a sample of revenue items recognised during the year and around the year end to ensure cut-off is appropriate
- Reviewed allocation between restricted and non-restricted funds, including associated expenditure

Conclusion

We have not identified any material misstatement arising from errors in revenue recognition.

Other areas where there is a higher assessed risk of material misstatement

We identified the following areas where there was a higher risk of material misstatement but they were not considered to be significant risks. We addressed these as part of our audit procedures as they did not require any additional, special audit consideration.



Risk of going concern status from adherence to relevant laws and regulations



Description and audit approach

We have performed the following procedures including:

- Considered whether any of our testing indicates breaches in laws and regulations
- Where we identified areas for which significant laws and regulations are applicable, we obtained assurance that these regulations continue to be complied with
- Considered the form of the audit opinion

Conclusion

We have not identified any material misstatement arising from the preparation of the accounts under the going concern assumption.

Risk of material misstatement arising from the valuation of instruments



Description and audit approach

We have performed the following procedures including:

- Reviewed evidence to conclude whether the valuation at which the instruments are currently held is materially accurate
- Ensured that all necessary disclosures have been included in the financial statements

Conclusion

We have not identified any material misstatement arising from the valuations of instruments at year end.

Other significant audit and accounting matters



Review of accounting policies

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice 'UK GAAP'. We have reviewed the accounting policies adopted by the Charity and have found them to be appropriate and applied consistently.

Changes to accounting policies

There have been no changes to accounting policies during the year. The investment policy wording has been updated to reflect the removal of fixed investments and the use of current asset investments only; this does not constitute a change in accounting policy.

Significant accounting estimates, areas of judgement and estimation uncertainty

- Instrument valuation – considered as a key risk as per above
- Allocation of costs between activities – costs are allocated on an actual basis where possible. Where costs incurred relate to a number of activities, they are apportioned on the basis of time spent on those activities. Allocations have been reviewed and are considered reasonable.

Financial statement disclosures

We have received a complete draft of the financial statements. All significant presentational items identified during our review have been amended.

Other significant matters

A prior year adjustment was processed to split out deposits with maturities of over three months as detailed in note 26 of the financial statements. Whilst material in size and therefore necessary to adjust, we consider the nature of this adjustment to be a relatively minor matter, being presentational and Balance Sheet to Balance Sheet only (between Investments and Cash at bank).

There are no other matters which we need to bring to the attention to those charged with governance.

Evaluation of misstatements



Uncorrected misstatements

In accordance with ISA (UK) 450 *Evaluation of misstatements identified during the audit* we are required to report any misstatements identified during the course of our audit which have not been corrected by management other than those which are considered to be 'clearly trivial'. This includes misstatements in reported amounts, classification, presentation or disclosure of reported items whether due to fraud or error.

Description	£ Balance sheet		£ SoFA		£ Gain
	DR	CR	DR	CR	(deficit)
Prepayments	4,979				-
Projects Venue Hire & Charges		(4,979)			-
<i>Being adjustment to recognise prepayments for Ruddock Performing Arts Centre (against opening reserves as there was a similar issue in the previous year, so the current year impact on the SoFA is already correct)</i>					

Misstatements in disclosures

In accordance with ISA (UK) 450 *Evaluation of misstatements identified during the audit*, misstatements can arise in reported amounts, classification, presentation or disclosure of a financial statement item. Misstatements in disclosures may be clearly trivial whether taken individually or in aggregate, and whether judged by any criteria of size, nature or circumstances.

We have not identified any misstatements in the financial statement disclosures to bring to your attention.

Corrected misstatements

We also report any material misstatements which have been corrected which we believe should be communicated to you to help you meet your governance responsibilities.

Description	£ Balance sheet		£ SoFA		£ Gain
	DR	CR	DR	DR	(deficit)
Cash at bank and in hand		(702,579)			-
Current asset investments	702,579				-
<i>Being the split of deposits held with maturities of over 3 months for the current year</i>					

Accounting and internal control systems

The objective of the audit is for us to express an opinion on the financial statements. The audit included consideration of internal controls relevant to the preparation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control.






Throughout the course of our work we have identified the following deficiencies in internal control which we have concluded are of sufficient importance to merit being reported to you.

In accordance with the terms of our engagement, we have not provided a comprehensive statement of all issues which may exist in the accounting and internal control systems or of all improvements which may be made.

In the table below, we have categorised the significant deficiencies identified in order to assist you in prioritising addressing them:

- Requires attention, but least urgent
- Important
- Most significant

We set out below the current year management letter points:

Issue	Recommendation	Management response	Significance
During our journal testing, it was noted that two concert venue fees invoiced in 2025 related to venue hire in 2026, and should have been recognised as a prepayment. This was discussed and noted that the amount was retained as an expense to ensure that ongoing venue hire costs were reflected accurately in the year. Historically these have not been recognised as prepayments, so the prior year cost relating to the current year was recorded in the prior year.	The amount relating to 2026 was highly immaterial (£4,979), however we recommend that expenditure is recognised in the year to which it relates, and that sufficient checks around year end are applied to detect missed items.		
During our expenses cut-off testing, it was noted that the associated expense for an invoice relating to the period December 2025 to February 2026 was included in full in the 2025 year.	The amount relating to 2026 was trivial (£1,040.40), however we would recommend that invoices relating to the following year are recorded as prepayments, rather than being expensed in the year.		
During our expenses cut-off testing, it was noted that there were two instances where an invoice was received in 2026 but related to 2025. The corresponding expense was not accrued, and was instead expensed in full in 2026.	The aggregate amount relating to 2025 was highly trivial (£174.96), however we would recommend that all expenses relating to the current year which are invoiced post year end are accrued in the year to which they relate.		

The management letter points from the prior year and their status are set out below:

Issue	Recommendation	Status
During the year there were two invoices incorrectly posted to the Access and Progression restricted reserve. While the posted balance was trivial from an audit perspective, further postings of this nature could create a material variance in the financial statements.	We recommend that there are no postings to the reserves during the year.	No such postings to reserves noted in the current year, therefore this point is considered cleared.
During our fixed assets testing, we identified an equal difference in cost and accumulated depreciation of Instruments between the FAR and the accounts.	This is considered low risk as the amounts net off to the same net book value, however we would recommend that the fully depreciated 'Opening Balance' asset is removed from the FAR.	No issues seen during this year's audit testing therefore, this point is considered cleared.
During our journal testing, it was discovered that one of our sample, while appearing as an expense recognised in the current financial year, was actually an expense relating to the subsequent year, and should have been recognised as a prepayment. While a very low balance, further postings such as this could create a material cut-off error, leading to profit and the balance sheet being misstated.	We recommend that expenditure is recognised in the year it relates to, and that sufficient checks around year end are applied to detect missed items.	Remains relevant for the current year and a similar point has been raised in the current year management letter points above.

Auditor independence and objectivity

We have complied with the FRC’s Revised Ethical Standard 2024 and all threats to our independence have been properly addressed through safeguards.



We identified the following threats to you in our Audit strategy report sent on 2 February 2026:

Threat	Safeguards to mitigate those threats
Self-review threat from accounts preparation	A team separate to the audit team performed accounts preparation work
Self-review threat from provision of ad-hoc VAT advisory services	A team separate to the audit team provides VAT advisory services when required

No additional threats were identified throughout the audit.

The firm provides audit services to the Charity in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 24 September 2020.

We confirm that, in our professional judgement, we are independent of the Charity and the objectivity of the audit engagement partner and audit staff is not impaired. We have considered the independence of the firm and partners, senior managers and managers conducting the audit.

Consideration of fraud

The responsibility for safeguarding the Charity's assets and for the prevention and detection of irregularities and fraud rests with the Trustees. Nevertheless, we are required to obtain reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, including those arising as a result of fraud.



Unless prohibited by law or regulation, we are required to communicate identified or suspected fraud involving management, employees who have significant roles in internal control or others where the fraud results in a material misstatement in the financial statements.

Our audit procedures did not identify any instances of actual, suspected, or alleged fraud. We will seek confirmation from those charged with governance on whether you are aware of any known, suspected or alleged frauds since last enquired in our audit strategy report.

Looking forward



Revisions to UK GAAP and Charities SORP – effective for your 2026 year end

Following extensive consultation, the Financial Reporting Council (FRC) has published revisions to UK GAAP which will be effective for accounting periods commencing on or after 1 January 2026. Principal revisions are around the accounting for revenue and leases as the standards are brought closer in alignment with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) albeit with some simplifications. The key change for most organisations is the requirement to bring certain operating leases onto the balance sheet. Following a consultation period the new SORP has now been published: [Download a full SORP - SORP](#)

The key changes are:

- Tiered reporting: there is a new three-tiered reporting regime based on gross income, each accompanied by differing levels of disclosure requirements.
- Income recognition: the SORP aims to explain the five step model for income recognition from FRS 102 in an understandable way for charities with relevant examples. It also aims to explain when the five step model, either in whole or in part, must be applied to membership income and income from royalties. Note that it does not apply to income from non-exchange transactions.
- Lease accounting: the SORP mirrors the requirements in FRS 102. The new module in the SORP provides additional information and examples to support charities in the application of these new requirements.
- Trustees' report narrative: additional reporting is set out covering impact reporting, reserves, going concern and the use of volunteers. It also introduces proportionate reporting for environmental, social and governance issues.

Updated Charity Governance code

Between May and August 2024, the Charity Governance Code steering group ran a consultation on the Charity Governance Code. The purpose of the consultation was to ensure the Code remains relevant and useful. Following a lengthy review period, the steering group published and updated version of the code on 3 November 2025.

The code is a refinement of the previous version and remains about best practice for Charities. Fundamentally it continues to guide governance and board behaviours in Charities.

The updated code can be found here: [Charity Governance Code 2025 - charitygovernancecode.org](#)

Other

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Lauren, Sophie and the team for all of their assistance with this year's audit.