Literacy Volunteers

(Registered charity, number 1167357)

Financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2026

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COMMUNITY ACCOUNTING

Literacy Volunteers
Trustees' annual report
for the year ended 31 March 2026

Full name Literacy Volunteers

Organisation type Charitable incorporated organisation

Registered charity number 1167357

Principal address Woodthorpe Grange, Woodthorpe Drive, Nottingham, NG5 4HA

Trustees
Michael Collis, Chair
Charlotte Stafford, Treasurer
Paul Hughes
Melanie Cope
Graham Stamper
Bethan Eddy
Maggi Jameson

Independent examiner
Eva Stevens, employee of Community Accounting Plus, Units 1 & 2 North West, 41 Talbot Street, Nottingham, NG1 5GL

Governance and management
The charity is operated under the rules of the CIO – Association constitution registered 25 May 2016 and most recently amended 21 March 2025.

New trustees are drawn from existing volunteers, member organisations and external candidates with an interest in the work and objectives of Literacy Volunteers. The Board of Trustees must have a minimum of five trustees and a maximum of twelve trustees at any one time.

Prospective trustees must preferably have skills and competences which will support the Charity. Once they have indicated their interest in the role of trustee, a discussion is arranged with one of the team/trustees.

Following this discussion, they complete a Fit and Proper form and are invited to attend a scheduled board of trustees' meeting after which, if they are deemed to be a suitable/eligible appointment they will be invited to join the Board. Neither party is under any obligation at this stage. Induction and training for the role is provided. An enhanced DBS check is carried out and their eligibility is checked in accordance with Charity Commission guidance.

At the AGM one third of existing trustees must step down in rotation and the trustees who have been appointed for the longest period since their last appointment/reappointment must stand down. Following this the vacancies created on the Board of Trustees are then filled at the AGM. Trustees can stand for re-election and other members or candidates can be nominated and elected.

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We operate under the guidance of our constitution adopted on 25th May 2016 (amended and re-adopted on 21st March 2025) when we became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, and also in the spirit of our original constitution adopted in May 1996 when the Charity came into existence as Literacy Volunteers in Nottinghamshire Schools.

Objectives and activities
To advance the education of children, adults and families by helping those experiencing difficulties in acquiring literacy and communication skills.
Literacy Volunteers aims to develop and promote speech, language, communication, confidence, self-esteem, literacy, strategies for learning in the home and a genuine interest in reading for pleasure. We seek to advance the education of children experiencing difficulties in acquiring literacy skills. We do this in primary schools and early years' settings and we use a number of evidence based programmes and projects.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit
During the year ended 31 March 2026, Literacy Volunteers continued to deliver literacy support both in primary schools and within community settings. Our work remained focused on addressing the social disadvantage and reduced educational opportunity that can result from poor literacy skills, particularly in areas of higher deprivation and among families facing barriers to engagement.

<u>The Schools Team</u>
Through our primary schools volunteers programme, we continued to recruit, train, vet and support volunteers to work alongside children to improve reading confidence, enjoyment of books and engagement with learning. These one-to-one and small-group sessions provide targeted support for children who may have English as an additional language, lower confidence, or limited reading support outside of school.

Our approach remained centred on delivering sessions in a creative, positive and child-focused way, helping children to build both literacy skills and self-esteem. Feedback received through schools continued to highlight improvements in children's confidence, willingness to participate and enjoyment of reading as a result of volunteer involvement.

<u>The Early Years Team</u>
Now in its ninth year, Learning to Love Books remained a cornerstone of Literacy Volunteers' early years provision. The programme continued to deliver high-quality early literacy support to families with children aged 0–4 through storytelling, rhyme, music and creative activities delivered in libraries, early years settings and community venues.

Sessions were aligned with the Early Years Foundation Stage and supported early language development, communication skills and school readiness. Craft activities, rhymes and storytelling continued to be complemented through the use of bespoke "Storyboxes", which model interactive approaches to sharing books at home and

promote book ownership. The programme continued to be particularly valuable for families where English is an additional language, with delivery incorporating accessible communication approaches, culturally relevant texts and inclusive resources.

Feedback from families continued to highlight the positive impact of the programme on children's confidence, communication and enjoyment of books. Parents reported improvements in vocabulary, attention and social interaction, with one parent sharing: *"My daughter has become better at sitting listening to a story being read."* Another commented, *"Making reading more fun and interactive,"* while others described increased confidence, friendships and more reading and singing taking place at home. Families particularly valued the welcoming and inclusive nature of the sessions, with one parent describing them as *"engaging and upbeat… creating a safe and non-judgemental space".*

By supporting families at a critical early stage in children's development, Learning to Love Books continues to demonstrate the value of early, preventative and community-based literacy interventions.

Public benefit statement
The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, 'Charities and Public Benefit'.

Summary of the main achievements during the period
In 2025, Literacy Volunteers appointed its first Charity Patron, Jacob Dunne, author, co-founder of the Common Ground Justice Project and campaigner for childhood literacy and social inclusion. Jacob brings significant media experience and profile, and has already played an important role in raising public awareness of the charity's work through media engagement and advocacy. The appointment marks an important strategic step in strengthening the charity's visibility, influence and long-term sustainability.

During the year, the charity continued to focus on strengthening its volunteer base and improving systems to support effective delivery. We continued to recruit volunteers and engage with schools in line with our longer-term aim of rebuilding volunteer capacity and reach within the communities we serve.

The charity maintained engagement with volunteers across Nottinghamshire through volunteer network activity, providing opportunities to share good practice, receive updates and feel connected to the wider organisation. Volunteer support and communication remained a priority in order to retain volunteers and sustain engagement.

During the year, the charity delivered a number of fundraising events, including volunteer and corporate evenings hosted at the Bromley House Library. These events supported income generation, strengthened relationships with volunteers and corporate supporters, and helped raise the charity's profile within the local business and cultural community.

Literacy Volunteers

The Early Years Team also strengthened its partnership with Nottingham Trent University, supporting students on Early Education placements and contributing to research activity focused on evidence-based early literacy practice. This collaboration supports both quality improvement and the long-term sustainability of the programme, while reinforcing the charity's links with a major local educational institution.

Literacy Volunteers secured a number of important grants that supported both service delivery and longer-term sustainability. As an example, the charity was awarded a £100,000, five-year grant from the 1001 Critical Days Foundation to support delivery of the Learning to Love Books programme for babies and families in Nottingham from January 2026. This provides a strong foundation for the continued development of the charity's early years work and represents a significant endorsement of our approach to early literacy.

Literacy Volunteers participated in local radio discussions to raise awareness of the charity's impact and appeal for volunteers. These included features discussing the role of volunteers, the difference volunteer support makes for children, and the benefits to schools and families.

The Early Years Team ran 70 Learning to Love Books sessions between April 2025 and March 2026. The sessions had visits from National Literacy Trust (NLT) and guest storytellers and attended "Castle Story Builders" event at Nottingham Castle on February 2026, hosted by NLT, to celebrate National Storytelling Week.

Financial review
The Charity has in financial terms benefited from another positive year in the period to 31 March 2026. The focus for the year was to continue to maintain a stable balance sheet to support the work we do by focusing on growing funds and controlling costs.

Income remained in line with prior year. Donations increased to £29,125 which was offset by a decrease in grants received. Costs increased overall as part of the growing team to support the charity and a strategic decision to invest in work with a consultant to improve visibility within the community.

Cash at the end of the year totalled £172,120 as a result of the focus on establishing a strong balance sheet to support the work at Literacy Volunteers.

For the period to March 2027, the budget has been approved and focus will be on continuing to identify income streams to support the charity's work and conscious spending to support Literacy Volunteer's goals.

The charity's policy on reserves
The Board recognises its responsibility to maintain reserves at a level sufficient to meet the charity's financial obligations should it cease operations. In particular, reserves are held to cover all contractual and statutory redundancy payments due to staff, together with an estimate of operating expenditure over a three-month period or

one school term run-off period. The Board considers this to represent good practice and an appropriate level of financial prudence for the charity.

Following a review during the financial year, the trustees have designated the sum of £50,000 as reserves held to cover the best estimate of this expenditure. This increase reflects changes in the charity's operating environment, including growth in the employee base and higher operating cost base in line with the charity's growth.

The trustees continue to strike a balance between retaining an appropriate level of reserves and investing available funds directly in the delivery of the charity's objectives, particularly the promotion of reading for pleasure and the improvement of literacy outcomes for children. To support this balance, the trustees intend to place greater emphasis on developing fundraising income as part of the charity's strategic objectives.

The trustees review the reserves policy annually, taking account of the charity's financial position, staffing structure, risk profile and the duties and obligations, and will adjust the designated reserves level as appropriate.

Financial risks
The Board of Trustees recognise the following risks:

- The trustees recognise the risk associated with fluctuations in income, including grant funding, and funds generated from subscriptions received from schools. To mitigate this, the trustees continue to focus on diversifying income streams and developing fundraising activity as part of the charity's strategic objectives, helping to strengthen financial resilience and reduce dependency on any single source of income. In addition, the charity works hard to keep overheads and operating costs as low as possible.

- The charity currently relies on the use of City Council provided facilities and technology. A change to the availability of these could result in additional costs and operational disruption. To mitigate this risk, the trustees maintain reserves at a level sufficient to ensure continuity of operations, including meeting core operating costs and continuing to be able to deliver sessions both for early-years and across our volunteer base, should this change be required.

- The Charity has previously concluded that we cannot pass on the full costs of recruiting and training volunteers to the schools supported. The evidence shows that although schools can tolerate some small increases in the subscriptions they pay, school budgets will not cover the charge we would have to make to fully recover our costs, even though the service is highly valued. As such, a key priority is to keep overheads as low as possible. In addition, there is a focus on identifying income streams, through grants and donations, which will be key in order to continue to bridge this shortfall.

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Acknowledgements
Here at Literacy Volunteers we are very grateful for generous support from many organisations and individuals. These include:

Nottinghamshire County Council
Nottingham City Council
Alison Fowler
Mr A Fearn
Sir John Eastwood Foundation
Charles Littlewood Hill Trust
The Mary Robertson Trust
Thomas Farr Charity
JN Derbyshire Trust
The Cumberland Trust
Chetwode Foundation
BGF Foundation
Hollygirt School
Forman Hardy Charitable Trust
Hedley Foundation
Jones 1986 Charitable Trust
Bassetlaw CVS
Jo Hindes
1001 Critical Days Foundation
Small Steps Big Changes
Bromley House Library
Margaret Hamilton
Daisy Parente – Welbeck Estates
The family of David Young
Carol Smith
Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust
Whitaker Charitable Trust
Richard Willis
The Cumberland Trust
Thoresby Charitable Trust
NCVS
Forever Notts
Your CVS
Elizabeth Greeley
Flick Allard
Mehnaz Younas
Andrew Tucker
Melanie Cope
Jacob Dunne
Kate Scott
Brian O'Neill
John Sykes - Skye Corporate Finance
Rob Carroll - University of Nottingham Business School
Austin Moore - Moore Law LLP Solicitors
Kirk Fletcher - Connected Data Limited

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Patrick Ellward - Opus LLP
Jonathan Lowe - Maven Capital Partners
Richard Brightly - Maven Capital Partners
Andrew and Julie Fowler - Claven Group Limited
Keith Pickering - Alantra
Nicola Cathorpe-Owen - Rotheras Bray Solicitors
Navdeep Sethi - Batfast Sports
Anna Mayfield – Gateley Solicitors
Shiv Nand - Gateley Solicitors
Andrew Borkowski - Borkowski Consultancy
Anthony Davy - Prime Nurture Services
David Griffiths - Sterling Commercial Finance
David Browne - Provantage
Mark Hughes - Browne Jacobson

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signed  Date 18/6/26
Michael Collis, Trustee

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Literacy Volunteers for the year ended 31 March 2026

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Literacy Volunteers (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2026.

Responsibilities and basis of report
As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').
I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

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

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

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed _____ Date 18/06/26
Eva Stevens BSc, CPFA
Employee of Community Accounting Plus

Literacy Volunteers
Receipts & payments account
for the year ended 31 March 2026

2025 Total Funds £		Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	*2026* Total Funds £
	Receipts				
83777	Grants & donations	2	29125	61778	90903
31901	Subscriptions		28128	-	28128
4998	Bank interest		3535	-	3535
120676	**Total receipts**		**60788**	**61778**	**122566**
	Payments				
9729	Activities & materials		330	9884	10214
1846	Advertising & marketing		4488	-	4488
202	DBS fees		221	-	221
481	Equipment, repairs & renewals		-	-	-
810	Independent examination fee		840	-	840
1123	Insurance		1141	-	1141
1010	Payroll services		1036	-	1036
1378	Professional fees		901	-	901
251	Publications & subscriptions		155	-	155
73503	Salaries, NI & pension		59911	23717	83628
126	Staff training		250	-	250
149	Stationery & office supplies		478	-	478
-	Sundry payments		388	-	388
34	Telephone, internet & postage		-	-	-
2416	Travel & subsistence		4235	231	4466
7574	Volunteer resources & training		3603	1269	4872
344	Website		448	-	448
100976	**Total payments**		**78425**	**35101**	**113526**
19700	**Net receipts/(payments)**		(17637)	26677	9040
143380	Cash funds at start of this period		129915	33165	163080
163080	**Cash funds at end of this period**		**112278**	**59842**	**172120**

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Statement of assets and liabilities
at 31 March 2026

2025			*2026*
£	**Cash assets**	**Note**	**£**
163032	Bank accounts		172072
48	Cash in hand		48
163080			**172120**
	Other monetary assets		
1862	Debtors - Subscriptions		5489
94	Prepayments	**4**	660
1956			**6149**
	Liabilities		
(2316)	Creditors	**5**	(1787)
(2316)			**(1787)**

These financial statements are accepted on behalf of the charity by:

Signed _____ Date 18/06/2026
Charlotte Stafford, Trustee

Literacy Volunteers
Notes to the accounts
for the year ended 31 March 2026

1. Receipts & payments accounts

Receipts and payments accounts contain a summary of money received and money spent during the period and a list of assets and liabilities at the end of the period. Usually, cash received and cash spent will include transactions through bank accounts and cash in hand.

2. Grants & donations

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£
Nottingham Trent University	-	600	600
SSBC	-	15184	15184
The Chetwode Foundation	-	5000	5000
The Hedley Foundation	-	3000	3000
The Jones 1986 Charitable Trust	-	9000	9000
The Leadsom Foundation	-	20000	20000
The Thoresby Charitable Trust	-	1000	1000
UKSPF - Bassetlaw CVS	-	7994	7994
BGF Foundation	1000	-	1000
Cumberland Trust	100	-	100
Give as you Live	4171	-	4171
J. N. Derbyshire Trust	1000	-	1000
Notts County Council	10900	-	10900
Payroll Giving	204	-	204
Sir John Eastwood Foundation	1000	-	1000
Sundry donations	1250	-	1250
The Charles Littlewood Hill Trust	2000	-	2000
The Forman Hardy Charitable Trust	1000	-	1000
The Mary Robertson Trust	2000	-	2000
The Whitaker Charitable Trust	1000	-	1000
Winifred Eileen Kemp Trust	3500	-	3500
	29125	**61778**	**90903**

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3. Funds analysis

	Opening balance	Receipts	(Payments)	Transfers	Closing balance
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds					
Learning to Love Books (SSBC9)	9151	-	(8293)	-	858
Learning to Love Books (SSBC10)	-	15184	(4072)	-	11112
Early Years (Masons)	3454	-	-	-	3454
Early Years (National Lottery)	19733	-	(10738)	-	8995
Books & Awards (Jessie Spencer)	815	-	-	-	815
Books & Awards (Thoresby)	12	1000	(492)	-	520
Learning to Love Books (1001 Critical Days Foundation)	-	20000	(3039)	-	16961
Schools (Chetwode Foundation)	-	5000	-	-	5000
Schools (Hedley Foundation)	-	3000	-	-	3000
Early Years (NTU student placements)	-	600	(74)	-	526
Schools (The Jones 1986)	-	9000	(399)	-	8601
Schools (Bassetlaw Project)	-	7994	(7994)	-	-
	33165	**61778**	**(35101)**	**-**	**59842**
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	95415	60788	(78425)	(15500)	62278
Designated funds					
Reserves	34500	-	-	15500	50000
	129915	**60788**	**(78425)**	**-**	**112278**

The transfer from the General fund to the Reserves fund is to increase the designated amount which reflects changes in the charity's operating environment, including growth in the employee base and higher operating cost base in line with the charity's growth.

The specific purposes for which the funds are to be applied are as follows:
Early Years Programmes/Learning to Love Books - to run our early years (0-4) storytelling sessions and Story Box project. Each Story Box contained a book, flash card for learning new words and a selection of fun resources for parents to support the home learning environment.
Schools - to deliver support in a creative and fun way to help all the children we work with to enjoy reading and learning from books whilst improving their confidence and self-esteem.

4. Prepayments

	£
Insurance	95
Payroll services	155
Professional fees	410
	660

5. Creditors

	£
Independent examination fee	894
Salaries, NI & pension (HMRC)	893
	1787

6. Trustees' remuneration

Trustees received no expenses, remuneration or benefits in this period.

7. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in this period.

8. Glossary of terms

Creditors: These are amounts owed by the charity, but not paid during the accounting period.

Debtors: These are amounts owed to the charity, but not received in the accounting period.

Prepayments: These are services that the charity has paid for in advance, but not used during the accounting period.

Restricted funds: These are funds given to the charity, subject to specific restrictions set by the donor, but still within the general objects of the charity.