Charity registration number 1186378

Company registration number 12305820 (England and Wales)

THE CHESTER BLUECOAT CHARITY

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

THE CHESTER BLUECOAT CHARITY

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Dr H K Symons	
	Mr A G Farrall	
	Mr J Rice-Jones	
	Ms L J Fearnall	
	Councillor P Chamberlain	
	Mrs S C Danby	(Appointed 28 May 2025)
	Dr N B Thomas	(Appointed 28 May 2025)
	Mr M J Snape	(Appointed 28 May 2025)
Country of incorporation	United Kingdom (England and Wales)	12305820
Charity registration	England and Wales	1186378
Auditor	Champion Accountants LLP 2nd Floor Refuge House 33-37 Watergate Row Chester CH1 2LE	

THE CHESTER BLUECOAT CHARITY

CONTENTS

	Page
Trustees' report	1 - 6
Statement of trustees' responsibilities	7
Independent auditor's report	8 - 10
Statement of financial activities	11
Balance sheet	12
Statement of cash flows	13
Notes to the financial statements	14 - 26

THE CHESTER BLUECOAT CHARITY

TRUSTEES' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2025.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and "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).

Objectives and activities

The Charity aims to assist people in need by providing grants and accommodation.

The Charity owns several properties in Chester so enabling generation of rental income, the provision of Almshouse accommodation and the provision of office accommodation to Third Sector organisations. The Charity's objectives can be summarised as follows:

1. To continue the provision of Almshouses by maintaining and improving the properties

1. To continue to improve the quality of life of individuals falling within the scope of the Charity by providing grants and support to organisations providing a service to those individuals

1. To improve the educational outcome of individuals falling within the scope of the Charity by continuing to provide bursaries and funding towards educational costs

1. To promote the Bluecoat building as a Third Sector Hub and commercial meeting venue for Chester

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Achievements and performance

During the year the charity and stakeholders have embarked on a clear methodology to deliver our strategy.

Our vision statement declares the mid-to-long-term vision of the charity. *"Bringing hope and change to our community"* and is our overarching target which projects The Chester Bluecoat Charity into the future and in so doing will help us define the plan and execution of getting us there.

Our mission statement is a short description of the purpose of the charity and reflect our articles and purpose. *"To support and improve the lives of those impacted by poverty, disadvantage and inequality"* explains what we do, offering direction and focus for everyone and what they can expect from us.

Our values of being Passionate, Collaborative and Brave are embedded throughout the Charity and provide the foundations for everything we do. They shape how we make decisions, build relationships and deliver our mission, ensuring that our work remains purposeful, responsive and rooted in the needs of the communities we serve. Through collaboration with grantees, communities and sector partners, we continue to listen, share knowledge and strengthen our collective ability to create meaningful and lasting change.

Being passionate is reflected in the commitment, energy and care that we bring to our work each day. It drives our determination to respond to growing need, to act with purpose and urgency, and to ensure that our resources are used where they can make a meaningful difference. This passion is shared by our trustees, staff and partners, and continues to strengthen our focus on bringing hope and change to the community.

Being collaborative is central to how we work with communities, partners, grantees and other organisations across the sector. It reflects our belief that greater impact is achieved when knowledge, resources and experience are shared, and when we listen carefully to those closest to the issues we seek to address. By building trusted relationships and working alongside others, we are able to strengthen local networks, support more joined-up responses and help create lasting change for the communities we serve.

Being brave means having the confidence to make thoughtful and sometimes bold decisions in uncertain times. It encourages us to challenge traditional approaches, embrace innovation and take action where we believe we can achieve greater impact. This has supported new ways of delivering our mission, including strategic funding decisions and initiatives that enable the Charity to respond more effectively to the changing needs of those we serve.

Together, these values have shaped a year of purposeful action and lasting progress to form our ongoing strategy.

Our achievements

In 2025 the Charity made tangible progress against its four strategic outcomes by strengthening community engagement, supporting organisations that deliver direct benefit to people affected by poverty, disadvantage and inequality, raising its profile as a local charity sector partner, and continuing to use its buildings and resources for public benefit. This section summarises how our activity during the year translated our mission into practical delivery through the Charity Hub, grant-giving and our almshouse provision.

The Charity's main objectives for the year were:

Outcome 1
We will maximise our opportunities for community engagement, inclusion and collaboration.

Outcome 2
We will enable lasting outcomes for the community, providing support that makes a real difference.

Outcome 3
We will enhance our public and professional profile, ensuring we are regarded as a community leaders who influence the local charity sector.

Outcome 4
We will maximise the use of our assets and resources to deliver real difference, enabling charities and communities to thrive

We have achieved our mission by focusing on two core areas: **Enabling charities to thrive** and **enabling our communities**, with priorities including:

i. Providing Almshouse Accommodation and Support - Continue offering safe and supportive housing for individuals in need within our community.
ii. Maintaining and Improving Almshouse Properties - Invest in the ongoing upkeep and enhancement of our almshouses, ensuring residents receive appropriate support and a high standard of living.
iii. Developing the Chester Bluecoat Charity Hub - Establish the Bluecoat as a hub of choice for charities and the community offering financial, practical, and strategic support to small or startup organisations and community projects.
iv. Increasing Commercial Revenue - Grow income from room and venue hire within the Bluecoat building to support our charitable work sustainably.
v. Delivering Strategic Grant Funding - Provide grants to core projects in and around Chester, with a particular focus on:
    - Improving health and wellbeing across communities
    - Creating opportunities and building resilience for young people and future generations
    - Supporting the essential infrastructure of charitable organisations such as; staff salaries, rent, administration, start-up costs and service delivery capacity.
vi. Exploring Co-Funding Partnerships - Collaborate with other grant funders to co-finance initiatives that support people in need and amplify collective impact.
vii. Reviewing Strategy and Impact - Regularly assess our strategic objectives and measure our effectiveness in delivering on our mission.

Impact

During the year, the Charity continued to deliver practical support against each of its strategic priorities. The following summary sets out the key activity undertaken and provides evidence of impact as appropriate.

Priority	What we have done	The difference we have made
Providing Almshouse Accommodation and Support	We continued to provide safe, supportive almshouse accommodation for individuals in need, helping residents maintain independence, security and connection within the local community. Support was provided through regular contact, responsive property management and signposting where additional help was required.	17 residents in total with 1 new resident joining us during the year.
Maintaining and Improving Almshouse Properties	We invested in the upkeep, safety and quality of our almshouse properties, ensuring homes remained well maintained and suitable for residents' needs. This included planned maintenance, responsive repairs and continued review of future improvement requirements.	The Buildings Manager managed significant repairs and ongoing maintenance throughout the year, supporting the upkeep and safety of the Charity's properties. Major refurbishment of three properties allowing new residents to secure a new home.
Developing the Chester Bluecoat Charity Hub	We continued to develop the Bluecoat as a hub for charities, community groups and local partners, providing accessible space, practical support and opportunities for collaboration. The building supported organisations to connect, share knowledge and deliver services for community benefit.	8 resident organisations are accessible at the Hub. With 15 using us as their mailing address. 14 new events hosted by The Chester Bluecoat Charity. We strengthened partnerships with organisations such as Cheshire Connect, helping local charities, businesses and community groups share expertise and respond to community need.
Increasing Commercial Revenue	We worked to grow income from room and venue hire, using the Bluecoat building more effectively to generate sustainable revenue that supports the Charity's wider charitable work. This helped strengthen resilience while keeping the building active and accessible.	£20,085 venue hire income 74 organisations booked rooms during the year with a 17% increase in income generated.

Delivering Strategic Grant Funding	We awarded grants and bursaries to organisations and projects supporting people affected by poverty, disadvantage and inequality, with a focus on health and wellbeing, young people and future generations, and strengthening the essential infrastructure of local charitable organisations.	Grants and bursaries paid out during the year totalled £198,848.
Exploring Co-Funding Partnerships	We explored opportunities to work alongside other funders and partners to increase the reach and effectiveness of charitable funding. This included conversations and collaboration designed to identify shared priorities and amplify collective impact.	
Reviewing Strategy and Impact	We continued to review our strategic objectives and consider how best to measure the difference our work makes. This included reflecting on delivery against priorities, considering evidence of need, and identifying opportunities to strengthen impact reporting in future years.	Strategic review activity completed with three new trustees joining in 2025.

The Bluecoat building continues to be brought to life by the tenants and charities who work from it, each contributing to a shared purpose of bringing hope, support and practical help to people across the community. Their presence means that the building is more than a place of work, it is a welcoming hub where people can find connection, guidance and opportunities to improve their lives. Through the dedication of these organisations, the Charity's assets are helping to extend positive impact well beyond the walls of the building. Calm Coffee CIC continues to provide access to wellbeing support, offering encouragement, connection and a trusted route to help for individuals seeking support with their mental health and wellbeing.

We also invested in strengthening our buildings and organisational resilience, including updates to security arrangements across our buildings and improvements to on-site meeting room technology. Training was also undertaken during the year, including health and safety, first aid and conflict management, helping to support a safe, effective and welcoming environment for residents, visitors, staff and partners.

We are also grateful to the volunteers from National Westminster Bank for their continued annual support in helping us maintain our historic buildings. Their practical contribution is valued by the Charity and helps us care for these important assets for the benefit of our residents, tenants and wider community.

The year also brought a number of challenges. We were saddened by the loss of two residents during the year and remember their contribution to the almshouse community with gratitude. Alongside this, the trustees and team progressed important lease negotiations across the Charity's property portfolio, which remains a key source of income supporting our charitable activities. We also continued negotiations relating to the south boundary wall, where critical repairs are required to protect the fabric of the estate and support the long-term stewardship of the Charity's assets.

2025 has been a very positive year for the Charity, and the progress achieved would not have been possible without the commitment and support of our terrific team and trustees. Together, we have continued to grow the Charity's stature and strengthen its impact across the community.

Financial Review

Reserves policy

It is the policy of the charity that unrestricted funds which have not been designated for a specific use or invested in tangible fixed assets (excluding listed investments) should be maintained at a level equivalent to between three- and six-month's expenditure. The Trustees consider that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised. This level of reserves has been maintained throughout the year.

Risk management

The Trustees have considered the major risks to which the charity is exposed and have reviewed those risks and established systems and procedures to manage those risks. The appropriate risk register is reviewed at Finance & Governance meetings and endorsed by main board.

Plans for future periods

In future periods, the Charity will build on the foundations established during the year, continuing to strengthen its role as a trusted local funder, landlord and community partner. We will seek to increase the support available to people and organisations affected by poverty, disadvantage and inequality, including through expanded grant opportunities and by exploring co-funding partnerships that can extend the reach and impact of our resources. The trustees will also continue to review how the Charity measures and communicates its impact, with a further review of the strategy planned for Q3 2026 to ensure that our priorities remain relevant, responsive and aligned with community need.

Structure, governance and management

The charitable company, The Chester Bluecoat Charity (company number 12305820) was incorporated on 8 November 2019 following Charity Commission approval for that company to be registered as a charitable company.

The trustees received formal approval from the Charity Commission on 18 December 2020 for a scheme whereby the new company replaces the individual trustees as the sole trustee of Chester Municipal Charities. The Governing document is the scheme dated 18 December 2000.

The registration of the two entities will be linked under a single charity registration. The external charity will be referred to as The Chester Bluecoat Charity, with legal and financial responsibilities continuing to lie with the original incorporated charity.

The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Councillor R I Bisset - NLA	(Resigned 28 November 2025)
Dr H K Symons	
Mr A G Farrall	
Mr J Rice-Jones	
Ms L J Fearnall	
Councillor P Chamberlain	
Mrs J Harvey	(Resigned 22 January 2026)
Mrs S C Danby	(Appointed 28 May 2025)
Dr N B Thomas	(Appointed 28 May 2025)
Mr M J Snape	(Appointed 28 May 2025)

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

Up to eleven trustees can be appointed to fulfil specific areas of expertise. Up to two further trustees are nominated by Cheshire West and Chester Council. Trustees receive training as appropriate and make all necessary declarations as are legally required upon their appointment.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the charitable company. All of the trustees are members of the charitable company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

The charitable company's current policy concerning the payment of trade creditors is to follow the CBI's Prompt Payers Code (copies are available from the CBI, Centre Point, 103 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1DU).

The charitable company's current policy concerning the payment of trade creditors is to:

- Settle the terms of payment with suppliers when agreeing the terms of each transaction;
- Ensure that suppliers are made aware of the terms of payment by inclusion of the relevant terms in contracts;
- Pay in accordance with the charitable company's contractual and other legal obligations.

Trade creditors of the charitable company at the year end were equivalent to 28 day's purchases, based on the average daily amount invoiced by suppliers during the year.

Organisational structure

The Charity's main board meets every two months, and there is one committee to manage the Finance and Governance, and Grant Giving.

Auditor

Champion Accountants LLP were appointed as auditor to the company and a resolution proposing that they be re-appointed will be put at a General Meeting.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

.....

Ms L J Fearnall
Chair of Trustees

Date: 23. 9. 26

THE CHESTER BLUECOAT CHARITY

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

The trustees, who are also the directors of The Chester Bluecoat Charity for the purpose 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 charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

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;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK 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 operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity 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 charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

THE CHESTER BLUECOAT CHARITY

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE CHESTER BLUECOAT CHARITY

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Chester Bluecoat Charity (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 December 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and 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 31 December 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, 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 requirements of 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 charity 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 charity'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 other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and 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 our audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the trustees' report; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities, the trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose 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 charity'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

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 extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

Extent to which the audit is considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

The responsibility for the prevention and detection of irregularities, including fraud, lies with the trustees and with those charged with governance. The objectives of our audit in respect of irregularities and fraud are to assess the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud, to obtain sufficient, appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks and to respond appropriately to fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit.

Audit procedures

We determine significant applicable laws and regulations through discussion with those charged with governance and our own knowledge of the industry and design audit procedures to help identify instances of non-compliance with those laws and regulations that may have a material effect on the financial statements.

We consider the applicable laws and regulations to be the financial reporting framework (FRS 102 and the Companies Act 2006), charity law, employment law, and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

We consider the control environment and the procedures in place to address identified risks, including management override, non-compliance with laws and regulations and to prevent and detect fraud or irregularity. Our procedures are designed to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement or error and include: enquiries of management and of staff in key compliance functions; review of reported incidents and reports from regulators; review of minutes of meetings of those charged with governance; review and testing of manual journals, relevant nominals and significant transactions outside the normal course of business; review of financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation; performance of analytical procedures.

We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and due to the inherent limitations of an audit, as described above, the audit cannot be relied upon to detect all instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: https://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 charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees 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 charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Susan Harris MA ACA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Champion Accountants LLP

25 September 2026

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

2nd Floor Refuge House
33-37 Watergate Row
Chester
CH1 2LE

THE CHESTER BLUECOAT CHARITY

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Endowment funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	1,241	400	-	400
Charitable activities	4	200,489	205,741	-	205,741
Investments	5	270,247	337,928	28,560	366,488
Total income and endowments		471,977	544,069	28,560	572,629
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	6	6,020	-	5,888	5,888
Charitable activities	7	475,485	576,296	-	576,296
Other expenditure	13	145	-	-	-
Total expenditure		481,650	576,296	5,888	582,184
Net gains/(losses) on investments	14	59,529	-	33,396	33,396
Net income		49,856	(32,227)	56,068	23,841
Transfers between funds		-	1,030,802	(1,030,802)	-
Other recognised gains and losses:					
Revaluation of tangible fixed assets		14,950	-	-	-
Net movement in funds	10	64,806	998,575	(974,734)	23,841
Reconciliation of funds:					
Fund balances at 1 January 2025		9,297,205	8,298,630	974,734	9,273,364
Fund balances at 31 December 2025		9,362,011	9,297,205	-	9,297,205

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

THE CHESTER BLUECOAT CHARITY

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	16		5,705,054		5,809,955
Heritage assets	17		135,000		120,050
Investment property	18		2,760,000		2,760,000
Investments	19		1,036,612		987,012
			9,636,666		9,677,017
Current assets					
Debtors	20	7,489		8,832	
Cash at bank and in hand		339,319		315,809	
		346,808		324,641	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	21	(351,117)		(280,283)	
Net current (liabilities)/assets			(4,309)		44,358
Total assets less current liabilities			9,632,357		9,721,375
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	22		(270,346)		(424,170)
Net assets excluding pension liability			9,362,011		9,297,205
Net assets			9,362,011		9,297,205
The funds of the charity					
Unrestricted funds			9,362,011		9,297,205
			9,362,011		9,297,205

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 23.9.26.

Ms L J Fearnall
Chair of Trustees

Company registration number 12305820 (England and Wales)

THE CHESTER BLUECOAT CHARITY

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

	Notes	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash absorbed by operations	26		(256,485)		(289,404)
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(180)		(2,425)	
Purchase of investments		(79,319)		(240,892)	
Proceeds from disposal of investments		89,248		229,370	
Investment income received		270,246		366,487	
Net cash generated from investing activities			279,995		352,540
Net cash generated from financing activities			-		-
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents			23,510		63,136
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			315,809		252,673
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			339,319		315,809

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Chester Bluecoat Charity is a charitable company limited by guarantee incorporated in England & Wales. The registered office is The Bluecoat, Upper Northgate Street, Chester, Cheshire, CH1 4EE

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "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). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

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 £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.5 Expenditure

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

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost 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.

Allocation of support costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include Head Office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases: Freehold land and buildings, some of which are listed properties, are included at cost and are not depreciated. It is the Governors' policy to maintain the buildings in a good state of repair, consequently they are considered to have an indefinite useful economic life. Annual impairment reviews have so far confirmed that the service potential of the buildings remains undiminished.

Freehold land and buildings	Not Depreciated
Property improvements	10% Straight Line
Fixtures and fittings	20% Straight Line

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Investment property

Investment property, which is property held to earn rentals and/or for capital appreciation, is initially recognised at cost, which includes the purchase cost and any directly attributable expenditure. Subsequently it is measured at fair value at the reporting end date. The surplus or deficit on revaluation is recognised in profit or loss.

1.8 Heritage assets

Heritage assets represent historic artefacts held by the Charity which are principally held and maintained for their contribution to knowledge and culture. The assets are recorded at their deemed cost when they were gifted to the Charity. Where it is impracticable to obtain a valuation of the assets, the assets are not held on the balance sheet at a valuation. The assets have been assessed to have indefinite useful lives and are therefore not depreciated. The heritage assets are reviewed at each reporting date for impairment - this may be caused by physical deterioration, breakage or new evidence giving rise to doubts over their authenticity.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.9 Fixed asset investments

Fixed asset investments are initially measured at transaction price excluding transaction costs, and are subsequently measured at fair value at each reporting date. Changes in fair value are recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year. Transaction costs are expensed as incurred.

1.10 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.11 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.12 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1 **Accounting policies** **(Continued)**

1.13 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.14 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated 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 where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

Key sources of estimation uncertainty

Property valuations

Property valuations are carried out by a Chartered Surveyor who is a trustee of the charity. No depreciation is charged on freehold properties as these are maintained to a high level, and regular revaluations are performed. Actual market values of properties can vary.

Long term funding commitments

The charity has committed to providing unconditional grants and bursaries to local organisations over multiple financial years. The long term commitments in the accounts are estimates based on the length of time the beneficiaries are expected to receive funding. The actual commitment may increase with inflation or decrease with beneficiaries leaving the schemes.

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Unrestricted funds 2024
	£	£
Donations and gifts	1,241	400

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Almshouses maintenance contributions	75,406	78,622
Bluecoat rent and service charges	125,083	127,119
	200,489	205,741

5 Income from investments

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Endowment funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Endowment funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Rental income	238,042	-	238,042	334,500	-	334,500
Other income	28,350	-	28,350	-	28,560	28,560
Interest receivable	3,855	-	3,855	3,428	-	3,428
	270,247	-	270,247	337,928	28,560	366,488

6 Expenditure on raising funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Endowment funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Endowment funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Investment management	6,020	-	6,020	-	5,888	5,888

7 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Maintain charity assets 2025 £	Grant funding 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Maintain charity assets 2024 £	Grant funding 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Direct costs						
Provision and maintenance of Almshouses	15,794	-	15,794	5,296	-	5,296
Provision and maintenance of Bluecoat building	74,793	-	74,793	65,056	-	65,056
Grants	-	7,974	7,974	-	158,715	158,715
Charitable donations	-	506	506	-	-	-
	90,587	8,480	99,067	70,352	158,715	229,067
Share of support and governance costs (see note 9)						
Support	337,100	-	337,100	308,150	-	308,150
Governance	39,318	-	39,318	39,079	-	39,079
	467,005	8,480	475,485	417,581	158,715	576,296
Analysis by fund						
Unrestricted funds	467,005	8,480	475,485	417,581	158,715	576,296

8 Description of charitable activities

8 Description of charitable activities **(Continued)**

Grant funding - Institutions

Education support
The Charity funded full bursary places at both The King's School and The Queen's School. For the year ended 31 December 2025 new grants awarded amounted to £nil (2024: £134,568). Multi-year grants paid out in the year were £119,225 (2024: £120,993). Grants are made to the schools and not to individual pupils.

Charitable support
Cheshire West Voluntary Action received grants from the Charity towards core costs so that they could continue to provide valuable services. For the year ended 31 December 2025 grants awarded amounted to £nil (2024: £5,500).

Supporting organisations

The Charity was pleased to be able to provide grant funding to a number of charitable and community organisations based in Chester. These included multi-year grants for core costs of organisations providing vital services in their local communities – such as meeting spaces, counselling support and finance and debt advice. This helps these organisations to make reliable future planning and maintain successful services.

Additionally the Charity has provided multi-year funding for projects helping local people with specific needs in mental health support and recovery from physical illness.

The amount paid out in the year was £79,623 (2024: £71,682).

Grant funding - Individuals

In line with the Charity's policy, the Charity did not provide any direct support to individuals during the 2025 year (2024: £nil).

9 Support costs allocated to activities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Staff costs	151,010	131,889
Depreciation	104,937	104,826
Bank charges & interest	423	423
Administration	36,090	54,529
Irrecoverable VAT	41,566	14,422
Motor & travel	1,692	1,175
Events expenditure	1,382	-
Governance costs	39,318	39,965
	376,418	347,229
Analysed between:		
Maintain charity assets	376,418	347,229

10 Net movement in funds

	2025	2024
	£	£
The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Fees payable for the audit of the charity's financial statements	6,200	6,000
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	104,936	104,826
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	145	-

11 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year (2024: £nil).

None of the trustees incurred or were reimbursed expenses during the year (2024: £nil).

12 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
Administration	6	5
Maintenance	1	1
Total	7	6

Employment costs	2025	2024
	£	£
Wages and salaries	142,729	125,534
Social security costs	4,366	4,180
Other pension costs	2,228	1,815
	149,323	131,529

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000.

13 Other expenditure

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Unrestricted funds 2024
	£	£
Net loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	145	-

14 Gains and losses on investments

Gains/(losses) arising on:	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Endowment funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Endowment funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Revaluation of investments	47,441	-	47,441	-	(31,923)	(31,923)
Sale of investments	12,088	-	12,088	-	65,319	65,319
	59,529	-	59,529	-	33,396	33,396

15 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

16 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings £	Property improvements £	Fixtures and fittings £	Total £
Cost				
At 1 January 2025	5,624,221	1,036,532	37,288	6,698,041
Additions	-	-	180	180
Disposals	-	-	(2,464)	(2,464)
At 31 December 2025	5,624,221	1,036,532	35,004	6,695,757
Depreciation and impairment				
At 1 January 2025	-	855,138	32,948	888,086
Depreciation charged in the year	-	103,653	1,283	104,936
Eliminated in respect of disposals	-	-	(2,319)	(2,319)
At 31 December 2025	-	958,791	31,912	990,703
Carrying amount				
At 31 December 2025	5,624,221	77,741	3,092	5,705,054
At 31 December 2024	5,624,220	181,394	4,341	5,809,955

17 Heritage assets

	£
At 1 January 2025	120,050
Revaluation	14,950
At 31 December 2025	135,000

17 Heritage assets (Continued)

Silver - Seal Matrix and Almsman's Badges
A collection of silver Almsman's badges and a seal matrix and mount held in the Grosvenor Museum on behalf of the Charity. These are recorded at their historic insurance replacement cost upon the Charity being gifted these assets in order to preserve their history.

Kings Arm's Kitchen Mock Parlour
Once forming the interior of the public house of 57 Eastgate Street the contents of "The Honourable Corporation of the Kings Arms Kitchen" the Mayor's parlour has been moved from the Grosvenor Museum to The Chester Bluecoat Charity, where elements are being displayed in the building. This does not carry at a value in the balance sheet.

18 Investment property

	2025 £
Fair value	
At 1 January 2025 and 31 December 2025	2,760,000

Investment property comprises the historic buildings of 45 Eastgate Street and 47-57 Eastgate Street in Chester City centre. The fair value of the investment property has been arrived at on the basis of a valuation carried out to reflect the value at 31 December 2025 by Justin Rice-Jones FRICS a Chartered Surveyor and trustee of the charity. The valuation was made on an open market value basis by reference to market evidence of transaction prices for similar properties.

19 Fixed asset investments

	Listed Investments £
Cost or valuation	
At 1 January 2025	987,012
Additions	79,319
Valuation changes	47,441
Disposals	(77,160)
At 31 December 2025	1,036,612
Carrying amount	
At 31 December 2025	1,036,612
At 31 December 2024	987,012

19 Fixed asset investments **(Continued)**

Fixed asset investments revalued

The above investments have been stated at market value. At 31 December 2025 the historic cost of the investments was £660,294 (2024: £658,134).

Included in the above investments are overseas investments with a valuation of £329,312 (2024: £277,186).

20 Debtors

	2025	2024
Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
Trade debtors	4,009	3,805
Other debtors	217	1,573
Prepayments and accrued income	3,263	3,454
	7,489	8,832

21 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Other taxation and social security	5,941	1,704
Trade creditors	10,031	551
Other creditors	267,048	172,919
Accruals and deferred income	68,097	105,109
	351,117	280,283

Included within accruals and deferred income is £45,629 of deferred income arising from rents received in advance (2024: £78,757). The full amount deferred in 2024 has been recognised in income in 2025.

The charity has committed to providing unconditional grants and bursaries to local organisations. A commitment has been recorded in the financial statements within other creditors falling due within one year of £132,672 (2024: £169,722). Each year the commitment unwinds with the grants paid and increases with the additional grants awarded.

22 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2025	2024
	£	£
Other creditors	270,346	424,170

The charity has committed to providing unconditional grants and bursaries to local organisations. A commitment has been recorded in the financial statements within other creditors falling due after more than one year of £270,346 (2024: £424,170). Each year the commitment unwinds with the grants paid and increases with the additional grants awarded.

23 Retirement benefit schemes

	2025	2024
Defined contribution schemes	£	£
Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes	2,228	1,815

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund.

24 Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

	At 1 January 2025	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Gains and losses	At 31 December 2025
	£	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	9,297,205	471,977	(481,650)	-	74,479	9,362,011

Previous year:	At 1 January 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Gains and losses	At 31 December 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	8,298,630	544,069	(576,296)	1,030,802	-	9,297,205

25 Related party transactions

Transactions with related parties

During the year the charity entered into the following transactions with related parties:

	Rental income	
	2025	2024
	£	£
Other relates parties	-	12,283

	Grants paid	
	2025	2024
	£	£
Other related parties	62,411	51,173
	62,411	51,173

25 Related party transactions **(Continued)**

The following amounts were outstanding at the reporting end date:

	Amounts owed to related parties	
	2025	2024
	£	£
Other related parties	-	3,001

The entities are related by virtue of having a trustee in common.

26 Cash absorbed by operations

	2025	2024
	£	£
Surplus for the year	49,856	23,841
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(270,247)	(366,488)
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	145	-
Gain on disposal of investments	(12,088)	(65,319)
Fair value gains and losses on investments	(47,441)	31,923
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	104,937	104,826
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease in debtors	1,343	6,186
(Decrease) in creditors	(82,990)	(24,373)
Cash absorbed by operations	(256,485)	(289,404)

27 Analysis of changes in net funds

The charity had no material debt during the year.