TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
1st September 2025 – 31st August 2026

SECTION 1
Charity Name: The Story Works (South)
Charity Registration Number: 1194175
Charity Registered Address: 17 Ravine Road, Bournemouth, BH5 2DT
Trustee Names: Dee Hughes (Head of Trustees)
Martina Mohr
Julia Bore

SECTION 2
The day-to-day work was overseen by Martina Mohr from May 2025 to the present in her role as Charity Manager. Martina took over the role from Elisabeth Moss after Elisabeth's charity visa expired. Martina Mohr, a German national, who will be working for The Story Works on a charity visa for the next twelve months. All aspects of the charity will transfer to Martina's control, and she will liaise with Elisabeth from time to time, who will be able to support and guide her where she can as Martina comes to understand the workings of the role.

All charity work related to the website and social media is handled by Sean Maudsley-Barton.

Volunteers are recruited in one of four ways:

- Through an advertisement on the SUBU (Student Union Bournemouth University) website.
- Through an advertisement on the AUBSU (Arts University of Bournemouth Student Union) website.
- Through an advertisement on the CAN (Community Action Network) website.
- Through student identification via Dee Hughes at BU (Bournemouth University).

Two evening events were run during the year, one in December 2024 and one in April 2025, to help raise awareness of the charity and to recruit volunteers from outside the student population. Five new volunteers were recruited this way with one of them becoming a trustee die to their large involvement with the charity.

Due to the increased workload in an ever-increasing number of projects it was decided to set up a core group of volunteers who would take over the role of trustees due to their ability to be at the coal face so to speak.

SECTION 3

Throughout the year The Story Works (TSW) sole objective is to deliver structured story-writing and creative workshops for local children within the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) area. TSW is situated on the Bournemouth University campus, so children who may otherwise never experience or understand what a university is are afforded the opportunity to experience for themselves a university environment. Workshops run on Wednesday afternoons and are led by the volunteers, primarily students at Bournemouth University or Arts University Bournemouth. Elisabeth was successful in recruiting volunteers from outside the student body and so even though the numbers are small we now have external volunteers.

The schedule of workshops runs from early October until the end of April. We are currently only able to deliver workshops during those dates as we rely on student volunteers and beyond those dates our student volunteers are often not available.

The workshops we run are for classes of thirty children from local schools that we have recruited with help from our connection with the BCP's Cultural Hub program. To introduce ourselves to new schools, we have had a short promotional film made by media production students at Bournemouth University. This film is available on our website which we direct potential schools to look at with a view to understanding what it is we are offering. Our recruitment by BCP to be a part of the annual Arts by the Sea Festival has also enabled us to make contact with new schools. The Arts by the Sea Bitesize Festival also enables us to run workshops in areas of deprivation such as West Howe and Bourne.

Predominantly we deliver workshops for children in the 7 – 11 age range. It is planned to increase the number of workshops we deliver during our next delivery year. That expansion (schools have already booked in for the 26-27 academic year) will involve more workshops for secondary aged schoolchildren. We have designed workshops specifically for them such as a scriptwriting workshop which we trialled this year and was a success.

As we look to empower our volunteers and to support their ideas a mural project was undertaken by two volunteers. This resulted in two murals being painted at local Doctors surgeries that had been designed by children during a workshop. The success of this has resulted in NHS Dorset Trust asking TSW to run a workshop to help design part of a mural for the Royal Bournemouth Hospital.

This year also saw the publication of our second children's picture book How the Duffle Monster Lost His Coat together with an anthology of the work created during workshops in the preceding year. Work from one school was also published in an anthology of work by McSweeney's Press in the US as part of a project for the International Youth Project Writers Project. A decision has been made to publish two further books, a third children's picture book and a book of poetry based on the work collected from the Poet Laureate Project we ran.

Other projects this year have involved us running a series of workshops for LGBTQ+ young people for Poole Museum, a workshop for foreign language adults at the increase the Peace Festival in Bournemouth and a comic book workshop at Poole Pride event. Finally, we are busy preparing for our first summer school to be held at the university during the school summer holiday.

SECTION 4

The Story Works charitable purpose is as follows:
'To advance education for the public benefit in writing and reading in all its forms by providing, in particular, but not exclusively, opportunities in storytelling and creative writing for children and young people.'

To fulfil the above, we facilitate and run structured story-writing workshops for children between the ages of 7-18. These creative sessions are guided by a design that allows for the children to engage with their imaginations in a supportive environment. These workshops have been overwhelmingly successful, and in response we have been provided with glowing testimonials from students and teachers who have attended our workshops.

To gather data and a sense of the children's response to the workshops we have produced a feedback sheet which every child completes on the conclusion of the workshop they have attended. The feedback sheets prove overwhelmingly positive results: over 95% of participants have rated our workshops as an 8/10 or above. We have begun to collate the children's feedback into a database, and we have designed a new teacher's feedback survey. To date we have calculated approximately four thousand children have so far taken part in one of our activities across the first five years of our existence. We aim to increase year on year the numbers of children we work with, but it must be recognised that we are volunteer run and we are a part-time charity. With greater resources (money, time) we would be confident of reaching far greater numbers.

SECTION 5

The charity's balance as of 31st August 2026 £9,975.03

The charity has no debts. Income has been derived from community work on BCP projects and the selling of a book. Income has also been raised through successful funding applications. As we have been entirely volunteer run and utilise the University's free spaces, we have not needed to rely on funding in the past.

SECTION 6

The only funds the charity maintains are those in the charity's bank account, and as Head Trustee, Dee Hughes is tasked with maintaining the account.

We were kindly given a £5,000 donation from Bournemouth University in the Fall of 2023, and this sum has meant that our bank balance is healthy. We annually pay for Public Liability insurance and our website domain name fee, which total to approximately £240. Our only other guaranteed, recurring payment is for DBS checks granted to our volunteers (£11.28 raising to £11.50 per volunteer).

Funding has recently been secured through our involvement in the BCP Arts by the Sea Festival and Bitesized Festivals. Revenue has also been generated through sales of our recently published book; The success of the first book we published, The Suspect Smell, by Tom Stone (a trustee) resulted in our decision to publish a second book in the summer of 2025. One of our AUB illustration volunteers, Oleksandra, will be illustrating a children's picture book for sale at events we attend and the website.

One of our limitations as a charity is our workshop timespan: we are largely inactive in the summer months due to our student volunteers being unavailable. We seek to become a twelve-month operation as we recruit volunteers outside of the universities and form new connections. This is an ongoing ambition. Our involvement in the bi-annual Writing Our World (W.O.W.) conference has also opened up possibilities for cross-collaboration with other organisations throughout the year and two trustees, Dee Hughes and Tom Stone attended the 2025 conference in Stockholm in July.

The Story Works is not tied to the school curriculum or any curriculum, so we allow the children who attend our workshops a freedom they do not have in formal education. This creative freedom allows children to avoid the barriers to learning that they experience at school. What we offer is a starting point for a lifelong learning journey with no specific direction other than providing an agency to each child they may not attain at school.

Having now successfully delivered workshops for five years, we have come to realise that the charity benefits not only our workshop attendees but the volunteers themselves; by empowering our volunteers to lead sessions and contribute their own ideas for workshops, we are encouraging children and volunteers (university students and those outside of a university) alike to champion their own voices and to pursue lifelong creative writing and thinking. By bringing together these two communities of practice we hope to nurture both learning and the development of lifelong creative and communication skills.

THE STORY WORKS (SOUTH) – Registered charity number 1194175

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 1/9/2025 – 31/08/2026

OPENING BALANCE	£8,808.55

INCOME:
BCP Arts by the Sea Festival
Book Sales
Funding Applications (Churchill, The Talbot Trust)
The Bournemouth Writing Festival (nominated charity)
Poole Museum
Increase the Peace Festival

EXPENDITURE:
Access Insurance
Website Domain Fee
Workshop Supplies – Lymington Printers
DBS Checks
Labour for BCP Arts by the Sea Festival
Events
T-shirt printing (50)
Book printing, and Oleksandra payment

Year End Balance (31/8/26)	£9,975.03