




Annual Report


2024/25

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Letter from the chair

The past year has seen BookTrust further strengthen its work to ensure children and families across England, Wales and Northern Ireland experience and enjoy the transformative benefits of reading.

We continued to deliver our long-standing, scaled, evidence-informed reading programmes as well as developing new models of support in order to increase our impact and reach new groups of children and families, with our brilliant partners.

Our work continues against a backdrop of economic and social challenge for the families we seek to support, and for organisations and individuals working with these families. The ongoing cost-of-living crisis, widening disadvantage and gaps in outcomes between children from lower and higher income households, and growing incidence of mental health challenges all make clear the urgency of our work to get children and families reading together. Reading is not the answer to all of these problems, but it does have the power to change children's lives. It supports cognitive development, bonding, attachment, wellbeing, school readiness and community connection. Reading can help children overcome challenges and serve as a protective factor against adversity.

In 2024/25 we continued our work to give children the best start in life through support to help families embed reading in everyday life. We reached 1.3 million families, working with over 35,000 delivery partners which included health visitors, family hubs, early years educators, library staff, and primary and secondary school teachers. In the early years, we engaged families in every community in England, Wales and Northern Ireland through over 7,000 delivery pathways, supporting over 30% of early years families on low incomes with impactful reading behaviour change programmes.

We also continued to build our work to support children from vulnerable family backgrounds. Nearly 11,000 children in long-term foster care engaged with our long-standing and much-loved Letterbox Club programme.



In partnership with Kinship and supported by the Department for Education in England we developed new support for kinship care families. We also launched Story Explorers, our new early years offer for kinship, foster and adoptive families, for over 700 families in its first year.

We remain committed to supporting schools and school-aged children. Over 47,000 children and their teachers engaged with the BookTrust Represents programme of virtual author visits. We supported primary school teachers through our digital programme of ideas, content and expertise to promote reading for enjoyment in the curriculum; continued to review hundreds of new books; and sent every primary school in England and Northern Ireland a copy of our Great Books Guide. In Wales, 49,564 nursery and reception-aged children experienced Pori Drwy Stori. Our secondary schools programme Bookbuzz reached nearly a quarter of a million children in Years 7 and 8, and we launched Bookspark, a new programme to drive reading enjoyment and engagement at Key Stage 3.

These are significant achievements – but we are ambitious for the next stage of our work. Our new five-year strategy, which we launched this September, sets out plans to deepen our impact across the early years, children’s social care and the school system, and to reach more children and families, particularly those on low incomes and from vulnerable family backgrounds.

The new strategy reaffirms our commitment to partnerships across our work. We will continue to support, design and evaluate programmes with our valued network of delivery partners. We will continue to inspire, support and learn with our network of international partners, as we remain lead members of the Global Network for Early Years Bookgifting and EU Read. We will continue to work with experts to build understanding and raise

the profile of the critical role reading plays, particularly in the early years. This influencing work builds on successes in the last year with organisations including Kinship, Place to Be and sector experts from the University of East London, Open University and University of Edinburgh. The next phase of our Reading Rights campaign, in partnership with Waterstones Children’s Laureate, Frank Cottrell-Boyce, will be an important focus in the year ahead.

These are ambitious goals which we will not meet without the continued generosity of our many supporters. We thank Her Majesty the Queen, who is such an important champion of reading, for her ongoing support. As a national portfolio organisation, we are grateful for the continuing support of Arts Council England. We are also deeply grateful to all our other funders, donors and friends who make our mission possible, and to our network of delivery partners in communities across the country who work with us to give children the best start in life. Finally, my thanks to my fellow trustees who give their time, expertise and passion for children’s reading so generously.

I end with a memorable comment from Frank Cottrell-Boyce on the Reading Rights campaign:

“When you share a story, you’re giving a child a hug that will last the rest of their lives.”

Your continued support on the next chapter of BookTrust’s journey will help make early shared reading a reality for this and future generations of children.

Chair of trustees



Introduction

BookTrust is the UK's largest children's reading charity, reaching **1.3 million** children and families each year in every community in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Reading brings **profound and wide-ranging benefits** that can have a lifelong positive impact on children's lives. At a time when many families face challenges, and the gap in outcomes is widening between children growing up in families with low incomes and their more affluent peers, reading is a way to make an immediate and long-term positive difference.

Figure: Benefits of reading by age



The core of our support is in the early years. We provide impactful behaviour-change programmes, comprising resources and support for families and partners to help families embed reading habits into their daily life. Our early years programmes are co-designed with families on low incomes, informed by evidence of what engages families, meets children’s developmental needs and enhances existing local support. As children get older, we continue to support their engagement with reading as they grow into independent readers.

In 2024/25 we set out to:

1. Embed reading into the early years of children in families on low incomes

2. Bring enjoyment and stability to children in adoption, foster and kinship care, through reading and sharing stories

3. Support schools to foster a love of reading



Our work in 2024/25

BookTrust in 24/25: **1.3 million families** supported, with **2 million books**, through **35,000 delivery partners** and over **7,000 early years pathways**



1.

Embed reading into the early years of children in families on low incomes

Over half a million families (90% of all 0–1 year olds) were introduced to the importance of reading through Bookstart Baby, which provides the tools and support that families need to share books at home. 65% of parents and carers responding to our evaluation survey say the books included in their Bookstart Baby pack were among the first they owned for their child.¹ Our research shows families who start sharing books and stories together early are more likely to develop a long-lasting shared reading habit.²

417,000 1–4 year olds, including 313,000 of families on low incomes, engaged with the Bookstart Toddler and/or Pre-schooler programmes. Through this programme, families experience high quality, interactive, development stage-appropriate books and reading activities and information, with inspiring and confidence building messaging, modelling from practitioners and access to digital tools.

¹ BookTrust Bookstart Baby Evaluation 2024/25

² BookTrust (2024) "Reading in the Early Years: Why starting shared reading early matters and the role of Bookstart Baby". London: BookTrust

³ BookTrust Bookstart Toddler and Pre-schooler Evaluation 2023/24: interim data

Responses to our survey tell us:



75% of families

learned something new about different ways they can read and share stories with their child



72% of families

believe more strongly in the benefits of reading for their child



77% of families

agree the pack prompted them to read or share stories more with their child³

2,449 libraries (around 90% of all libraries) and more than 60,000 children in England, Wales and Northern Ireland took part in BookTrust Storytime, our national library programme designed to support families with children aged 0–5 to build positive reading habits, through enjoyable story sharing in libraries and at home.

In Wales, 49,564 nursery and reception-aged children received Pori Drwy Stori, our bilingual programme aimed at developing literacy, numeracy, speaking and listening skills. Over 780 partners signed up for Big Welsh Rhyme Time and, as part of our Welsh Bookstart Early Years programme, 30,130 packs were distributed. Held in Cardiff, BookTrust's Early Years Reading Conference gave professionals from education, academic, health and creative sectors a day dedicated to best practice around sharing books and stories during children's early years.



We increased the number of pathways that Bookstart Toddler and Pre-schooler reach families, which is now over 7,000. This diversity of routes to reach families is key to getting our programmes to those who need them most, as is our work with well-established partners to identify new ways to support families.

Responses to our survey tell us:



90% of early years partners

agree BookTrust resources help them engage children and families on low incomes with reading⁴

Across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, our network of diverse, committed partners in local authorities, health, early years education, and the third sector have helped create an ecosystem of reading – focusing support and resources for the families who need them. We've continued to strengthen and support this network. We provided 1,357 Storyteller backpacks, with over 10,850 books, as well as props and activities for early years practitioners to lead children and families in story sharing experiences. We completed a website transformation project, making our digital support for partners easier to find and use. Beyond this, we expanded our webinar series, hosting four webinars for our early years delivery partners.



I love this offer. The targeted nature means we are able to concentrate our work where it's needed the most, and really focus our attention there."

BookTrust Delivery Partner, talking about Bookstart Toddler and Pre-schooler

⁴ BookTrust Early Years Partner Survey 2024/25

2.

Bring enjoyment and stability to children in adoption, foster and kinship care, through reading and sharing stories

10,683 children in long-term foster care, or from other vulnerable and disadvantaged backgrounds, received books and resources to inspire a love of reading through our long-standing Letterbox Club programme.

Responses to our survey tell us:



96% of children

like or love Letterbox Club



72% of children

are reading more on their own after receiving Letterbox Club⁵

Over 1,000 kinship carers were able to access books, alongside information, advice and support through our work with Kinship, the leading kinship carer charity, as part of their programme of training and support funded by the Department for Education. The learning and partnerships this created, provide a strong basis for the future role BookTrust can play in supporting kinship carers to unlock the relational benefits of reading to support the children in their care.

⁵ Letterbox Club Evaluation 2024



Many of our children have had such a difficult start in life. They've experienced the trauma of being separated from their parents and what books can do is create that really magic moment where you sit with someone who loves you, who talks to you and tells you a story and it can make you feel like you belong."

BookTrust Delivery Partner

We launched Story Explorers, our new early years offer for kinship, foster and adoptive families, providing monthly kits with books and resources to support joyful story sharing experiences at home. 287 children received subscriptions through a range of partners including local authority and independent fostering agencies, regional and voluntary adoption agencies and virtual schools. Our evaluation shows that the shared rituals families build around the kits help create a safe space for children, leading to multiple benefits around settling, emotional regulation and bonding.





“

We have always read to her and used the hard books with music buttons and flaps. There was always a slight element of enjoyment, but it has only been in recent weeks we have seen her show her own interest in books.

The first book she received from you was Julia Donaldson’s book Postman Bear, and there were tears in of joy in our house a few weeks ago when she took the book herself and started turning the pages by herself and spending some time looking at each page. Thank you for these books – they are very much appreciated and have had a big impact on a foster child’s life.”

Foster carer, talking about Story Explorers



3.

Support schools to foster a love of reading

Across primary and secondary schools, 47,820 children from 1,594 schools were inspired by our BookTrust Represents programme, which comprises virtual author visits from authors and creators of colour and teacher support. Each half term, 60 of these schools with the most disadvantaged students were given free books for children to keep, providing 18,000 books in total across the year. The BookTrust Northern Ireland author tour allowed more than 1,800 students to meet and be inspired by celebrated authors and illustrators, and take home a book to keep.

We continued to provide the information schools need to support their pupils' engagement with reading, sharing our knowledge of books that excite and engage through book reviews and recommendations (sharing 365 new reviews across the year). Our Great Books Guide went out to every primary school in England and Northern Ireland, with a carefully chosen selection of recommendations to help teachers find every child a book that excites them.



98% of teachers and librarians

agree Bookbuzz supports them to encourage reading for pleasure in their schools⁶

We also released new research on the [vital role teachers play in supporting children's love of reading](#) and [the role of reading in supporting children's wellbeing](#).

We expanded our webinar programme, hosting five webinars for schools across the year.

In secondary schools, nearly a quarter of a million children in Years 7 and 8 chose a book of their own to keep from a selection of expertly curated books through the Bookbuzz programme. We also launched Bookspark, a new programme of 40 curated books and supporting resources to inspire children in Key Stage 3 to read regularly and build their reading enjoyment.



It's helping us engage... the students who need the most literacy support in a really effective manner, and it's stimulating them to read and it's stimulating their desire to read. So we've been really pleased with it."

Secondary school Head of English, talking about Bookspark

⁶ Bookbuzz Teacher and Librarian Survey 2025

Other highlights from 2024/25

A major focus for the year **was raising cross-sector awareness** and advocacy for the importance of sharing books and stories from the earlier moments in childhood.



With our support Children's Laureate 2022/24, Joseph Coelho, completed his marathon Laureate Library Tour – visiting over 70 libraries across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. In an evolution of our Reading Together vision, new Children's Laureate Frank Cottrell-Boyce launched the Reading Rights campaign. Together with BookTrust, he hosted the Reading Rights Summit which brought together expert voices and policy makers in local authorities, health, education, early years, literacy and arts sectors. This summit generated a vision for making the life-changing benefits of reading accessible to every child, and highlighted key asks for the next stages of the campaign.

A key strand of our Reading Rights campaign was to shine a light on the critical role sharing stories plays in supporting children from vulnerable family backgrounds. We hosted a parliamentary reception, where sector leaders, parliamentarians, policy makers and practitioners came together to discuss how to ensure sharing stories is a tool that practitioners will reach for in supporting these children's social and emotional wellbeing.

BookTrust worked with the University of Exeter and National Trust through RENEW, a partnership programme focused on biodiversity renewal, to explore representation of biodiversity in children's books and find opportunities to build engagement with nature through books and stories. We hosted the second Biodiversity Storytelling Summit, attended by publishers, authors, teachers, librarians, illustrators and scientists, which focused on creating new biodiversity narratives and visual storytelling in children's literature.

Internationally, we continued to convene the BookTrust-founded Global Network of Early Years Bookgifting, sharing best practice and research across an international community of organisations engaged in early years reading.



Evidence informed, design led

Throughout 2024/25 we maintained our focus on research and evaluation to ensure everything we do drives impact for children and families, in line with our refreshed **Theory of Change**.

We continued our work with our learning zones (in Blackpool, Brent, Leeds, Leicester, Hartlepool, Sandwell and Somerset), completed our first longitudinal study with early years families on low incomes, and ran our annual surveys with families and delivery partners. We launched the BookTrust Learning Oversight group who provide expert input on our research and evaluation approach.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Children from diverse and excluded communities are over-represented in our target audience groups of families on low incomes and children from vulnerable family backgrounds.

This year we continued to select, recommend and distribute thousands of inclusive books with stories and illustrations that are representative of a diverse range of different lives, experiences and cultures. We included diverse perspectives in our research and design activities, and explored new ways to ensure a wide range of voices contribute to our research, design and development. We supported new creators of colour and arranged face-to-face and virtual events for creators of colour to visit primary and secondary schools to inspire children with their work. We further extended our early years partnership network to improve our access to families in diverse and excluded communities across the UK.

To do our best work as an organisation, we want to involve a wide range of perspectives, backgrounds and lived experiences; we will do this through continuously improving and challenging our co-design approaches and also by working with a wide range of partners and by attracting and retaining a diverse staff body.



Sustainability

Mindful of the impact that our activities can have, we regularly review how we work, our supply chain, procurement practices and logistics.

This year we continued to promote environmental understanding among children by identifying appropriate books and producing associated booklists to guide families and teachers.

Through our collaboration with the University of Exeter and the National Trust, as part of the three-year RENEW partnership, we are working to create measurable biodiversity renewal and increased access to biodiversity through children's books. Through this work, we are exploring the role that books can play in supporting greater understanding of biodiversity, and how nature can inspire children to read.



The future

In 2025/26 we will continue to work with all communities across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, with an **ongoing drive to reach and support children and families in greatest need.**

We are launching our new strategy which sets our priorities for the next five years. These represent a continuation of our long-standing focus areas, and a commitment to continue to learn with families and our partners.

Our priorities for 2025/26 include:

1.

Children from vulnerable family backgrounds build strong foundations for life through reading

We will increase our engagement and strategic partnership activities to raise the profile of the benefits of reading for children from vulnerable family backgrounds. Working with experts and advocates – including authors and illustrators – we will create wider recognition of the role that reading plays in supporting children in adoption, fostering and kinship care.

We will continue to deliver our Letterbox Club and Story Explorers programmes, designing new ways to engage practitioners and grow our reach. We will also continue to develop our model of support for children in kinship care. We are committed to working with families, practitioners and partners

to evolve these programmes, to help unlock the unique power of reading and sharing stories, not just for the educational benefits, but for wellbeing, stability, and a sense belonging.



2.

Reading together is embedded in the life of early years families with low incomes

We will continue to support babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, with programmes grounded in our family and child-centred ethos and our knowledge of what works to create behaviour change. We'll reach more children from families on low incomes with our targeted Bookstart programmes including Storytime, alongside maintaining the delivery of Bookstart Baby, and our early years offer in Wales.

We will build on the success of our approach to creating multiple interactions with families, joining up and embedding support deeply within communities. We'll continue to

strengthen the vital role partners play in building families' reading habits, including improving our digital support offer for early years partners. We will refresh our support to libraries, building on new insights of what engages families into BookTrust Storytime. We will also begin to develop a flexible group storytelling offer that can be used in community settings, to inspire families to read together.

We will pilot and develop place-based approaches to help bring to life our vision for models of a sustainable reading ecosystem, that can be scaled and adapted in line with the specific needs of local communities.

Figure: BookTrust's Early Years Programmes



3.

Reading is a habitual part of the everyday life of all children, with focus on those who need support the most

In primary schools, we will continue to distribute our Great Books Guide, deliver Pori Drwy Stori in Wales, and develop new ideas for support to children in Key Stage 2.

In secondary schools, we will continue to help children see themselves as readers, supporting choice and ownership of what they read through Bookbuzz. We'll reach even more children and facilitate social reading experiences through our new Bookspark programme.

Through our ongoing book reviews, webinars and online content, we will continue to support teachers to engage children in reading, and support children and families to keep reading at home.

By continuing to provide support (informed by evidence and behavioural insights) at key moments as children start school and transition into independent readers, we will help build and maintain their enjoyment and connection to reading.



Our funders and supporters

We extend a huge **thank you** to the many thousands of BookTrust partners who work with us, and specifically to:

- **Our Patron, Her Majesty the Queen**, for her ongoing patronage and support for the cause of reading, and our President, Sir Michael Morpurgo, for his long-standing support and inspiration.
- **Our national network of Bookstart coordinators, local authorities, practitioners and community partners**, operating in every community in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. To those supporting families in libraries, community organisations and early years settings; to health visitors and to local authority and schools partners: thank you for being a crucial part of what we do.
- **Our partners in publishing, authors and illustrators**, who are at the heart of our work to inspire children and families on their reading journeys.

We are grateful for the generous support we receive from those who share our mission to get children and families reading for pleasure:

- Arts Council England
- Arts Council of Northern Ireland
- Welsh Government/Llywodraeth Cymru
- Department for Education (Northern Ireland)



There are many individuals, companies, trusts and foundations who generously supported our work in the past year.

For their long-standing and generous support, particular thanks is due to the Mohn Westlake Foundation and to Waterstones.

We would like to take this opportunity to recognise and thank:

- Bhim Ruia Foundation
- Bloomsbury Publishing
- Bookshop.org
- Browns Books
- Build-A-Bear Foundation
- Emerald Publishing Limited
- Enterprise Mobility
- Eric Hieltes Stiftelse
- Gapper Charitable Trust
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- George Cadbury Trust
- Gigglemug Charitable Trust
- Harris Poll
- J&H Orlander Trust
- Lincoln Business Improvement Group Elmer Trail
- Marigold Trust
- MarketingTwentyOne
- Mercury Engineering
- Mintaka Trust
- MM Wealth
- Mohn Westlake Foundation
- Mrs M A Lascelles Charitable Trust
- Mushens Entertainment
- Pan Macmillan
- PDT Partners
- Pension Insurance Corporation
- Peters Ltd
- Princeton University Press
- Promote Your School
- RSM UK Foundation
- Sevenoaks Literary Festival
- Simon And Philip Cohen Charitable Trust
- Slightly Foxed
- Sweet Cherry Publishing
- The Elizabeth Frankland Moore and Star Foundation
- The Eranda Rothschild Foundation
- The Folio Society
- The Haremead Trust
- The Sir Ralph Pendlebury 1880 Charity for Stockport's Neediest Residents
- The Tanlaw Foundation
- Vision Architectural Glazing Installations Ltd
- Waterstones
- Westminster Abbey
- Wilmington Trust

Fundraising policy

We use **multiple channels to fundraise from various audiences**. When developing campaigns, we assess the impact our fundraising could have on an individual and take actions to mitigate any negative impact.



When running fundraising campaigns, we welcome feedback and use this to help shape future fundraising campaigns. We always treat donor data responsibly and are compliant with all UK data protection laws. Our privacy policy is published on our website and gives details of the information we hold and how and why we process it. We respect the privacy and contact preferences of our donors and will respond promptly to any requests to cease contact.

We are committed to generating income in a manner that protects all individuals, especially any vulnerable donors. In this respect, we will not place any undue pressure on individuals to donate, nor will we solicit or accept donations from

anyone who we know or suspect may not be capable of making their own decisions.

We are registered with the Fundraising Regulator. Our registration demonstrates our commitment to fundraising in a way that is legal, open, honest and respectful and complies with the Code of Fundraising Practice and the Fundraising Promise.

We record and investigate all fundraising complaints received and use this information to inform our fundraising strategy. We aim to deal with any complaints about our fundraising activities in a timely manner. During the 2024/25 financial year, we received 8 complaints (2023/24: 7); all complaints were amicably resolved in a timely manner.



Financial review

We continued to **strengthen our network** of funders this year, increasing our total income from £12.0m to £12.4m, enabling us to invest further in our strategy. We finished the year with a planned operating deficit (before gain on investments) of £0.1m (2024: deficit of £0.1m), reflecting our investment in the new strategy.

We received £5.8m of funding as part of our contract with Arts Council England, which has now been extended to 2026/27. We were also successful in securing £0.8m (2024: £0.8m) of funding from

the Education Directorate of the Welsh Government to support our work in Wales – this was the second year of a two-year commitment. We also received £0.06m from the Department for Education in Northern Ireland, and £0.07m for our delivery in partnership with Kinship as part of Kinship’s contract with the Department for Education England.

Our fundraising income from corporate sponsorship and individual giving grew by 16% from the previous year. Trusts and Foundations income increased by 20%.

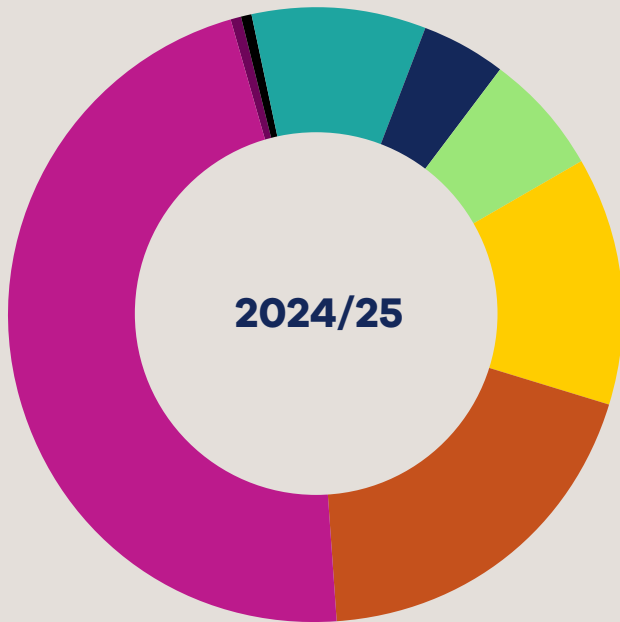
Our traded programmes, Bookbuzz and Letterbox Club, continue to be a material source of income. Letterbox Club accounted for £1.4m (2024: £1.5m) of the total income for the year and Bookbuzz £0.9m (2024: £0.9m).



Overall, our total income **increased by £0.4m to £12.4m** (2024: £12.0m).

2024/25

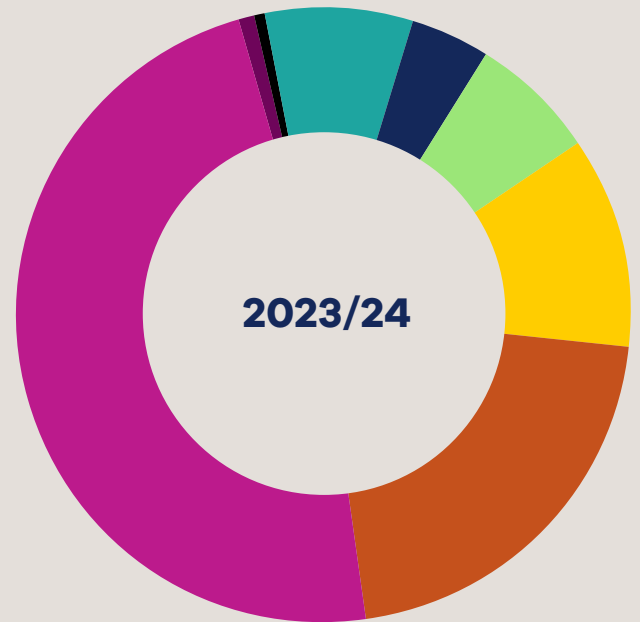
Total income of £12.4m



- Individual Giving **12.8%**
- Corporate Partnerships **4.5%**
- Trusts and Foundations **9.0%**
- Traded Programmes **19.1%**
- Northern Ireland **0.6%**
- Wales **6.4%**
- Arts Council England **46.6%**
- Kinship **0.5%**
- Other **0.5%**

2023/24

Total income of £12.0m

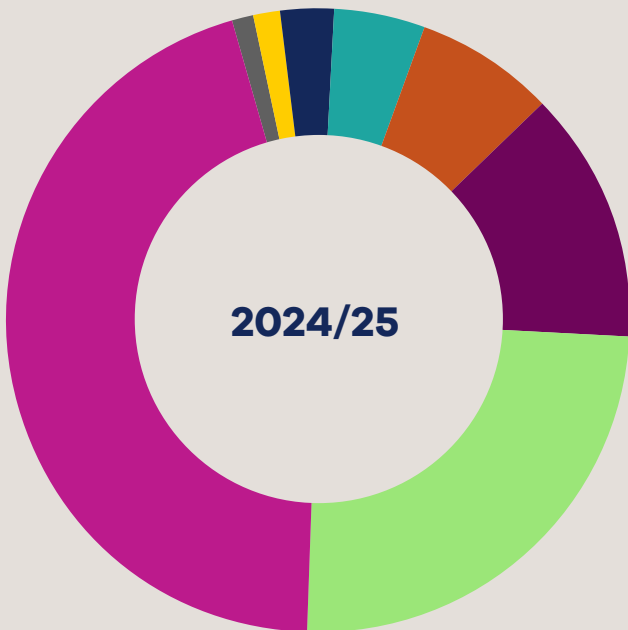


- Individual Giving **11.3%**
- Corporate Partnerships **4.1%**
- Trusts and Foundations **7.7%**
- Traded Programmes **21.0%**
- Northern Ireland **0.6%**
- Wales **6.7%**
- Arts Council England **47.9%**
- Other **0.7%**

In 2022/23 we agreed with the board our strategic shift to children in households with low incomes and from vulnerable family backgrounds. This continued during 2024/25 and is embedded in our new five-year strategy, starting 2025/26. Further investment in our programmes led to **expenditure increasing by £0.4m to £12.5m** (2023/24: £12.1m).

2024/25

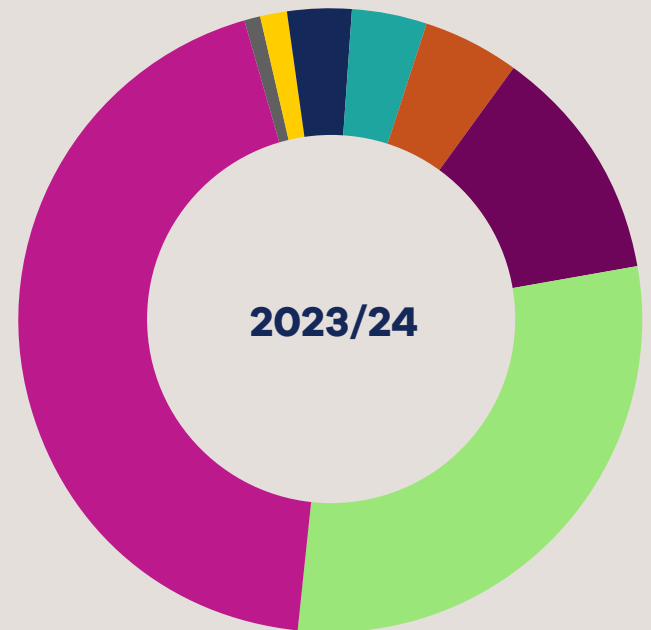
Total expenditure of £12.5m



- Staffing costs **£5,652,000**
- Books and resources **£3,117,000**
- Distribution/warehousing **£1,635,000**
- Research, publicity and engagement **£902,000**
- Establishment and office **£572,000**
- IT **£363,000**
- Professional fees **£182,000**
- Travel and subsistence **£109,000**

2023/24

Total expenditure of £12.1m



- Staffing costs **£5,327,000**
- Books and resources **£3,571,000**
- Distribution/warehousing **£1,471,000**
- Research, publicity and engagement **£587,000**
- Establishment and office **£478,000**
- IT **£405,000**
- Professional fees **£160,000**
- Travel and subsistence **£98,000**

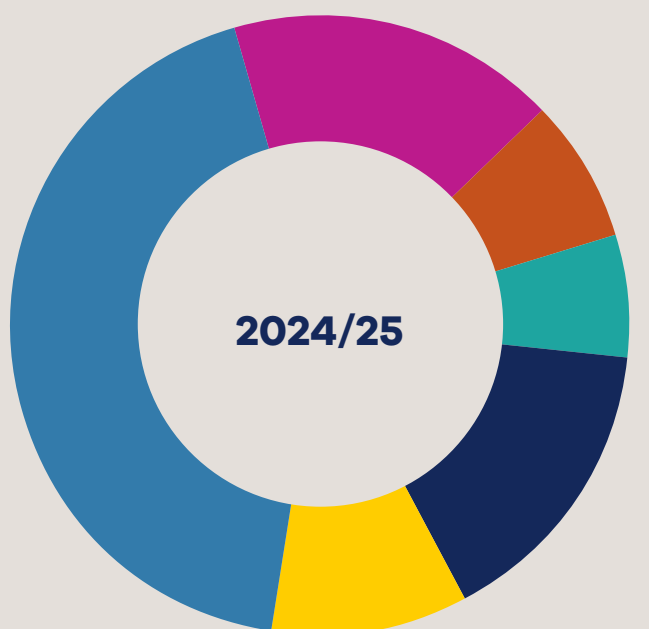
Our spend against strategic objectives (analysed below) demonstrates our continued investment in our capacity to broaden support for children from vulnerable backgrounds, as a key part of our strategy. We have also invested in our fundraising capacity with the aim of growing our income and therefore increase investment in our strategic objectives.

Strategic Objectives (SO)

SO1 and 2	Initiate shared reading and supporting disadvantaged families in their early years to get reading
SO3	Encouraging children and families to continue on their reading journeys
SO4	Supporting children from vulnerable family backgrounds to enjoy the benefits of reading
SO5	Building a community of advocates for reading

2024/25

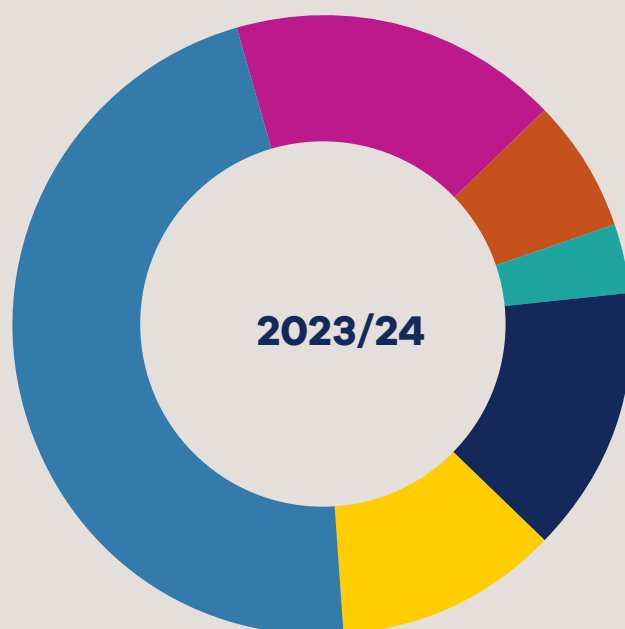
Total expenditure of £12.5m



- Strategic Objectives 1 and 2 **44.3%**
- Strategic Objective 3 **10.7%**
- Strategic Objective 4 **15.8%**
- Strategic Objective 5 **4.7%**
- Fundraising **7.5%**
- Overheads **17.0%**

2023/24

Total expenditure of £12.1m



- Strategic Objectives 1 and 2 **46.8%**
- Strategic Objective 3 **11.6%**
- Strategic Objective 4 **14.0%**
- Strategic Objective 5 **3.6%**
- Fundraising **6.9%**
- Overheads **17.1%**

BookTrust's funds are divided into two categories:

Restricted – Restricted funds are funds that can only be used for particular purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by

the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes, aligned to the development of our strategic objectives. The allocation of restricted funds is detailed by strategic objective in the notes to these accounts.

Unrestricted – These funds are available for the use at the discretion of the directors in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Reserves Policy – This sets out a minimum level of unrestricted funds to enable the charity to address foreseeable scenarios. It further sets out limits for the liquid portion of this fund to ensure that all current financial obligations to partners, suppliers and staff can be met in a timely manner.

Unrestricted Reserves – The trustees have reviewed our reserves policy and, considering a worst-case scenario of an orderly winding up of the charity, have agreed a minimum level of reserves of £4.5m should be retained. This balance comprises £2.2m to meet any outstanding financial liabilities in such a scenario, and is supplemented with additional transitional reserves, where the aim would be to maintain a further £2.3m. This would account for approximately three months of expenditure to allow for a managed reconfiguration of the organisation to a smaller, more tightly focused organisation. This recognises our commitments on leases, to staff and to committed traded activity, and also takes into account working capital requirements which are driven by advance purchasing (typically in the Far East) to support a six-to-nine-month production and distribution cycle that enables us to deliver large scale national interventions.

Free Reserves – The trustees recognise the obligation of the charity to pay its staff, suppliers and others in full in a timely manner, against seasonal patterns of cash flow. To ensure that this is possible, the trustees have determined that a minimum level of free reserve should be maintained such that all current liabilities can be met in the event of a short delay in receipt of income from grants, etc.

Based on present projections of expenditure this level has been set to maintain an average free reserves position of £1.5m, drawing down from investments when required to maintain this level.

These policies are reviewed annually by the trustees to ensure an appropriate allocation of reserves to the achievement of the charity's strategic aims and purpose.

The total value of all funds at 31 March 2025 was £6.2m (2024: £6.2m) of which £3.5m (2024: £3.5m) was held as investments, £1.5m in cash (2024: £2.1m), and the balance of £1.2m (2024: £0.6m) in working capital. Of the £6.2m, £nil (2024: £0.2m) was restricted for specific purposes. This leaves £6.2m (2024: £6m) in unrestricted funds which is £1.7m (2024: £1.5m) above our minimum reserve requirements. Free reserves stand at £2.6m (2024: £2.7m), again well in excess of minimum free reserve requirements. The trustees are satisfied that the approved plans for the next three years ensure that funds above the minimum policy requirement will be deployed effectively against the charity's objectives.

Investment policy

BookTrust's investment portfolio can be broken down into two main categories: managed funds and cash on deposit. Our primary objective is to increase the real value of our investments while managing our risk. With respect to our managed funds, we want to invest in a way that provides a high level of diversification, flexibility and liquidity (with limited exposure to market movements). Our managed funds are managed by Lothbury Wealth Management Limited through two sub-strategies: a low volatility portfolio and a balanced risk growth portfolio. We work closely with Lothbury Wealth Management Limited to monitor performance against agreed market benchmarks and our investment objectives.

Risk and governance

Key risks and uncertainties

Our risk management is reviewed regularly and is supported by strong governance to ensure compliance with the regulatory framework within which we operate.

We have identified the following as our key risks:

Impact

There is a risk that it takes us longer to deepen our impact than we had hoped because some of our assumptions and hypotheses are wrong. To mitigate this risk, we have a robust learning approach, which includes learning objectives over a five-year period, a learning oversight group, a learning review process, and an annual learning plan. We assess our impact and adapt based on what we've learned.

Profile and political environment

There is a risk that in a turbulent and fast-changing political environment we may struggle to make our voice heard and maintain our profile. To mitigate this risk, we have developed the capacity and capability of our communications team, and our executive leadership team is increasing its external engagement. In addition, in relation to our work in the early years, the launch of 'Reading Together' has enabled us to extend our external engagement and is an important tool to highlight our significant contribution. We are thoughtfully selecting and building external relationships with those we want to influence and who we want to be seen standing alongside.

Pressure on our external delivery partners

BookTrust receives support from a wide range of organisations. Financial and delivery pressures are being felt by key partners in local government as well as by other current and potential new local delivery partners. There is a risk that these pressures may impact on our plans for delivery or may hamper our learning and development work. We are mitigating this through increased capacity within our partnerships team as well as taking a more targeted approach with partners.

Income generation

BookTrust receives support from a wide range of donors and there is a risk that, in the context of challenging economic conditions with high levels of inflation and cost-of-living pressures, we struggle to hit income generation targets. To mitigate this, we have built and monitor a five-year financial plan, drawing on work by our income generation team as they seek to diversify our income streams. We are developing approaches for traded programmes, and these are being informed by a range of initiatives, for example the development of prototype interventions or research to understand potential customer priorities. We also keep our traded programmes fresh and fit for purpose through continuous improvements and we learn from our users to understand the opportunities and challenges that they are facing, so we can stay relevant to them.

Organisational change

We have put in place a stretching programme of work in order to deliver our ambitions and there is a risk that we are unable to deliver this. To mitigate this, we have a change plan managed by the Co-CEOs, and our evolved internal governance structure helps with the prioritisation of activity. We continue to grow our presence in Leeds and to embed our flexible and distributed working model, both of which help with recruitment and retention.

Fast-changing external environment

There is so much external change on many fronts, we might not identify things that are going to affect us early enough to respond and react. To mitigate this, we regularly scan and make sense of the external environment, and feed in our insights to teams and projects so they can adapt as needed. In our Learning Reviews, we conduct landscape analysis and assess the implications for our work and how we will respond to external pressures.



Legal and administrative information

Charity Name	BookTrust
Charity Registration Number	313343
Company Registration Number	00210012

Patron	Her Majesty the Queen
President	Sir Michael Morpurgo

Board of Trustees

The trustees of BookTrust (the charity) are its trustees for the purpose of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as the trustees.

Ellen Broomé	(Appointed 1 September 2024)
John Coughlan CBE	Chair
Radha Chakraborty	Vice Chair (Resigned 18 December 2024)
Professor Matthew Cripps	
Gautam Dalal	Honorary Treasurer
Professor Tim Hobbs	(Appointed 1 September 2024)
Professor Anthony Kessel	(Resigned 18 December 2024)
Nigel Langstaff	
Hilary Murray Hill	
June O'Sullivan MBE	
Edward Poultney	(Appointed 1 September 2024)
Victoria Sellick MBE	Vice Chair (From 19 December 2024)

Co-Chief Executives	Annie Crombie and Diana Gerald MBE (Appointed as Co-Chief Executives on 9 June 2025. Until 8 June 2025, Diana Gerald was Chief Executive)
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Company Secretary	Jennifer Rachael Bailey
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Registered Office	1 Aire Street, Leeds, England, LS1 4PR
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Our Advisers

Auditors	Sayer Vincent LLP, 110 Golden Lane, London EC1Y 0TG NatWest, 111–117 Putney High Street, London SW15 2LL
Bank	Russell-Cooke, 2 Putney Hill, London SW15 6AB
Solicitors	To June 2024: Epoch Consulting, Queen Square House, Queen Square Place, Bath, BA1 2L
Investment Managers	From June 2024: Lothbury Wealth Management Limited, 65 London Wall, London, EC2M 5TU

Structure, governance and management

BookTrust is a private company limited by guarantee without share capital and a charitable company limited by guarantee having no share capital incorporated on 28 November 1925 and registered as a charity on 1 July 1963. It was established under a Memorandum of Association which established its objects of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association.

The board of trustees last reviewed our Articles of Association in 2023 and we are now operating under Articles adopted by special resolution on 9 October 2023.

Governance and management

Under the terms of the current Articles of Association, management of BookTrust's affairs is vested in a board of not less than four trustees. Trustees are appointed for an initial period of up to three years and may be reappointed for up to two further terms, each of three years. The board have agreed that, while on occasion trustees may be asked to serve for three terms, it will continue to be usual practice for members of the BookTrust board to serve a maximum of two terms of office.

The board of trustees administers the charity and exercises its scrutiny role through board meetings, held at least quarterly, and standing committees. We have three main committees:

- (i) Finance, Risk & Audit,
- (ii) Nominations and
- (iii) Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Remuneration.

The board has also established a Donations, Acceptance & Refusal committee which meets as required.

The board has established trustee lead roles for key areas, notably safeguarding, governance, equality and diversity, environmental sustainability and, people and culture. The board reviews its delegations, including to committees, at least annually.

Trustee recruitment is informed by skills need. Skills audits of trustees are undertaken periodically to ensure that we have the right balance of skills and experience and to identify areas for focus in future trustee recruitment. We also review the make-up of our board to ensure that we have sufficient diversity and monitor this through regular audits of board composition. Over this year, we reviewed board composition to inform trustee recruitment. Following a thorough recruitment search, we appointed three trustees in September 2024, bringing new skills and expertise as well as seeking to ensure that board membership reflects BookTrust as a nationally distributed organisation.

All new trustees are provided with a comprehensive induction programme with information provided on their role, the organisation and its operating context in addition to meeting with key staff. The board holds at least one away day for trustees each year as well as online briefings over the year. In addition, all board members are provided with regular updates and are encouraged to attend events and training.

There is an annual review of board effectiveness. Approximately every three years we commission an external review of governance and did this most recently in 2023/24.

The next review of board effectiveness will be conducted internally and be led by the chair of the board. Informed by the reviews and their findings, we continue to take steps to strengthen BookTrust's governance and to develop and deliver agreed priorities. The trustees have agreed a Charity Code of Governance action plan which incorporates recommendations from the board effectiveness reviews.

For the financial year 2024/25, Diana Gerald was in role as Chief Executive, having been appointed by the trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity. In June 2025, the board appointed Annie Crombie and Diana Gerald as Co-Chief Executives. To facilitate effective operations, the Chief Executive/Co-Chief Executives have delegated authority for operational matters including finance, employment and other programme and delivery related activities.

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) comprises:

Diana Gerald MBE

Co-Chief Executive Officer
(effective June 2025)

Annie Crombie

Co-Chief Executive Officer
(effective June 2025)

Colin Atkins

Chief Operating Officer

Benedict Arora

Director of Communications
(resigned 31 December 2024)

Katie Florence

Director of Communications
(appointed 29 July 2025)

Mike Bues

Director of Finance

Lizzie Catford

Director of Children's Books

Claire Goodall

Director of Design, Development & Strategic Planning (resigned 30 April 2024)

Julie Hayward

Director of Partnerships

Ruthann Hughes

Director of Research & Impact

We have continued to develop our executive leadership team to ensure that our senior staff bring us sufficient diversity and the breadth of expertise and skills we need to manage BookTrust's activity, both in the range of work and our geographical reach through working with an extensive range of partners. Members of the executive leadership team have leadership roles as well as delivery/operational responsibilities.

All personnel aside from the Co-CEOs and members of the executive leadership team who report to the Co-CEOs are remunerated within a pay framework set using job evaluation and analysis and, where relevant, external benchmarking. There is also an annual cost-of-living review. Changes to the pay policy as well as to the annual cost of living award are decided upon by the board on the recommendation of the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Remuneration Committee. Remuneration of the Co-CEOs is agreed by trustees based on a formal performance evaluation and periodic external benchmarking. In addition, trustees set annual salary ranges for members of the executive leadership team.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees (who are also directors of BookTrust 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 BookTrust and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of BookTrust 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
- 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
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that BookTrust 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 BookTrust and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of BookTrust and therefore taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on BookTrust's website

Public benefit

BookTrust has referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing its aims and objectives and in planning future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

Statement as to disclosure of information to the auditor

The trustees who were in office on the date of approval of these financial statements have confirmed, as far as they are aware, that there is no relevant audit information of which the auditor is unaware. Each of the trustees have confirmed that they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as directors in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that it has been communicated to the auditor.

Trustees' annual report, incorporating the strategic report, approved by order of the Trustees.

Approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Directors and signed on their behalf by:

John Coughlan

Chair

Date: 29/09/2025

Gautam Dalal

Director

Date: 29/09/2025

Independent auditor's report to the members of BookTrust

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of BookTrust (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, 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 FRS 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 March 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
- 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 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 BookTrust'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 trustees' annual report, including the strategic 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, 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, including the strategic report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The trustees' annual report, including the strategic 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 trustees' annual report including the strategic report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which 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

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the 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

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 are set out below.

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, the finance, audit and risk committee, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
 - » Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;

- » Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
- » The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](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 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.

Jonathan Orchard

(Senior statutory auditor)

8 October 2025

for and on behalf of

Sayer Vincent LLP

Statutory Auditor

110 Golden Lane, London, EC1Y 0TG

Statement of financial activities

(including income and expenditure account for the year ended 31 March 2025)

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2025 (£) £'000	Restricted funds 2025 (£) £'000	Total funds 2025 (£) £'000	Total funds 2024 (£) £'000
Income from:					
Statutory funding		5,788	945	6,733	6,661
Corporate partnerships		491	67	558	493
Individual giving		1,574	13	1,587	1,357
Trust and foundations		38	1,075	1,113	928
Traded activity		2,369	-	2,369	2,520
Investment dividends and interest		72	-	72	64
		<u>10,332</u>	<u>2,100</u>	<u>12,432</u>	<u>12,023</u>
Expenditure on:					
	2a				
Raising donations		1,050	62	1,112	1,021
Charitable activities					
Strategic objectives 1 and 2		5,772	907	6,679	6,828
Strategic objective 3		1,331	268	1,599	1,694
Strategic objective 4		2,026	378	2,404	2,030
Strategic objective 5		251	485	736	524
		<u>10,430</u>	<u>2,100</u>	<u>12,530</u>	<u>12,097</u>
Net expenditure before gains on investments	3	(98)	-	(98)	(74)
Net gain on investments	7	65	-	65	148
Net (expenditure)/income		(33)	-	(33)	74
Transfer between funds	11a	187	(187)	-	-
Net movement in funds		154	(187)	(33)	74
Total funds brought forward		6,005	187	6,192	6,118
Total funds carried forward		6,159	-	6,159	6,192

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2025

Company Registration Number 00210012

	Note	2025		2024	
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Intangible assets					
Asset under development	6		240		-
Current assets					
Investments	7	3,513		3,451	
Stock		1,331		1,380	
Debtors	8	1,411		1,447	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,509		2,075	
		<u>7,764</u>		<u>8,353</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	(1,845)		(2,161)	
Net current assets			5,919		6,192
Net assets			<u>6,159</u>		<u>6,192</u>
Funds					
Restricted funds	11a		-		187
Unrestricted					
General funds	11a		6,159		6,005
			<u>6,159</u>		<u>6,192</u>

Approved and authorised for issue by the board of directors on 29 September 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

John Coughlan
Director

Gautam Dalal
Treasurer

Cashflow statement

As at 31 March 2025

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net income before investment gains for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	(98)	(74)
Interest	59	53
Decrease in stock	53	88
Decrease in debtors	37	512
Decrease in creditors	(315)	(509)
Net cash provided by operating activities	(264)	70
Cash flows from investing activities		
Interest	(59)	(53)
Purchase of intangible assets	(240)	-
Proceeds from sale of investments	-	1,827
Purchase of investments	-	(617)
Net cash movement in investments	(3)	(195)
Change in cash in reporting period	(566)	1,032
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash in hand		
Balance brought forward	2,075	1,043
(Decrease)/increase in year	(566)	1,032
Balance carried forward	1,509	2,075
Cash in hand		
Bank balance	1,509	2,075
	1,509	2,075

Notes to the accounts

31 March 2025

1 Principal accounting policies

(a) General information

BookTrust is a UK registered charitable company limited by guarantee. Its registered offices are at 1 Aire Street, Leeds, LS1 4PR.

(b) Basis of accounting

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

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

(c) Preparation of accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees consider there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. The review of our financial position, reserves levels and future plans gives trustees confidence the charity remains a going concern for the foreseeable future.

(d) Fund accounting

Unrestricted:

Unrestricted funds support working capital requirements, cover for risk management and are available for use at the discretion of the directors in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted:

Restricted funds are funds that can only be used for particular purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes, as detailed in note 10.

Notes to the accounts

31 March 2025

(e) Income

All income is included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific activities are applied to particular categories of income:

- Unrestricted donations are recognised as income when they are quantifiable, probable and entitlement is transferred to BookTrust. This is typically on receipt and acceptance of the donation.
- Income from any appeal for donations for a specific reason is treated as restricted income; and is recognised when the conditions of the appeal have been met.
- Legacies are recognised when all three of the following criteria are met:
 - a. Probable – the charity is aware that probate has been granted.
 - b. Measurable – in practice this could come from final estate accounts, cash received or correspondence from executors/solicitors confirming an amount to be distributed.
 - c. Entitlement – taken as the earlier of the final estate accounts being approved or cash received. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.
- Grant income from Arts Council England is accounted for as unrestricted income in the period to which it applies.
- Income from charitable activities is accounted for as income only when the conditions under the terms of the grant have been fulfilled and includes contributions from organisations for the supply of packs, books, promotions and prizes.
- To the extent that they are not subject to performance-related conditions, income from grants, including government grants, for a specific purpose are accounted for as income as they are received and are accounted for as restricted funds.
- For relevant grants, income is accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance. Where the grant is received in advance of performance, its recognition is deferred and included in creditors. Where entitlement occurs before the grant is received, it is accrued in debtors.
- Investment income is included when receivable.

Notes to the accounts

31 March 2025

(f) Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and this is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:

- Fundraising costs comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income and the costs of fundraising. Fundraising costs are those incurred in seeking grants and include the cost of disseminating information in support of the charitable activities.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by BookTrust in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
- Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and includes the audit fees and costs linked to the company secretary.
- Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources. These are incorporated into the expenditure figures in the statement of financial activities.

(g) Stock

Stock is valued at cost price if it is to be used in the programme the following year. Obsolete stock is written down to zero and stock held under contract is valued at the net realisable value.

(h) Fixed Assets

Assets over £10,000 are capitalised.

(i) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

(j) Creditors and provisions

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

(k) Cash at bank and in hand and cash equivalents

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash held in accounts.

Notes to the accounts

31 March 2025

(l) Financial instruments

With the exception of investment assets, the trust only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value. Investment assets are measured at fair value.

(m) Pensions

Employees are eligible to join the stakeholder pension scheme operated by Scottish Widows. Employees join the stakeholder pension contract directly with Scottish Widows. BookTrust makes a contribution to the pension scheme of 7% of employee salary and also acts as agent in collecting and paying over employee pension contributions.

(n) Investments

Investments are valued at their market value ruling at the balance sheet date, which gives rise to unrealised gains and losses that are included in the statement of financial activities. The portion of the investments that are intended to be for the long term are shown as a fixed asset.

(o) Significant accounting judgements and sources of estimation uncertainty

There are no areas in the accounts where management has been required to make significant judgements or estimations due to uncertainty.

Notes to the accounts

31 March 2025

2a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

Charitable Activities

	Raising funds	Strategic objective 1 and 2	Strategic objective 3	Strategic objective 4	Strategic objective 5	Governance costs	Support costs	2025 Total	2024 Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Books and resources	192	1,973	383	568	1	-	-	3,117	3,571
Research, publicity & engagement	172	148	216	222	114	-	30	902	587
Distribution/warehousing	2	1,015	184	421	13	-	-	1,635	1,471
Payroll costs (note 4)	526	2,256	498	705	451	37	882	5,355	5,074
Other staffing costs	-	31	21	23	5	-	216	296	253
Travel and subsistence	1	47	8	25	15	-	13	109	98
Professional fees and finance costs	26	-	1	6	-	41	108	182	160
Establishment and office costs	5	14	3	5	2	-	543	572	478
IT	-	56	13	19	9	-	265	362	405
	924	5,540	1,327	1,994	610	78	2,057	12,530	12,097
Support costs	182	1,096	263	395	121	-	(2,057)	-	-
Governance costs	6	43	9	15	5	(78)	-	-	-
Total expenditure 2025	1,112	6,679	1,599	2,404	736	-	-	12,530	-
Total expenditure 2024	1,021	6,828	1,694	2,030	524	-	-	-	12,097

Of the total expenditure, £10,430,000 was unrestricted (2024: £10,333,000) and £2,100,000 was restricted (2024: £1,764,000).

An explanation of each strategic objective can be found on page 25.

Notes to the accounts

31 March 2025

2b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

Charitable Activities

	Raising funds	Strategic objective 1 and 2	Strategic objective 3	Strategic objective 4	Strategic objective 5	Governance costs	Support costs	2024 Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Books and resources	179	2,384	429	579	-	-	-	3,571
Research, publicity & engagement	137	106	156	90	67	-	31	587
Distribution/warehousing	3	920	190	356	2	-	-	1,471
Payroll costs (note 4)	458	2,103	568	615	348	30	952	5,074
Other staffing costs	22	43	28	19	3	-	138	253
Travel and subsistence	-	49	11	16	8	-	14	98
Professional fees and finance costs	25	8	4	2	1	37	83	160
Establishment and office costs	2	7	3	4	1	-	461	478
IT	6	39	15	12	4	-	329	405
	832	5,659	1,404	1,693	434	67	2,008	12,097
Support costs	183	1,132	281	325	87	-	(2,008)	-
Governance costs	6	37	9	12	3	(67)	-	-
Total expenditure 2024	1,021	6,828	1,694	2,030	524	-	-	12,097

An explanation of each strategic objective can be found on page 25.

Notes to the accounts

31 March 2025

3 Net outgoing resources

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
This is stated after charging the following:		
Direct costs and other operating charges include:		
Operating leases		
• Hire of equipment	-	5
• Rents payable	374	322
Auditors' remuneration		
• Audit services	17	17
• Non-audit services	5	-

Notes to the accounts

31 March 2025

4 Staff costs

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Salaries	4,380	4,150
Social security costs	464	427
Pension costs	478	445
Redundancy and termination payments	33	52
	<u>5,355</u>	<u>5,074</u>

Number of employees receiving total gross remuneration in the year in the range:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
£60,000 – £69,999	5	4
£70,000 – £79,999	4	4
£80,000 – £89,999	1	2
£90,000 – £99,999	1	-
£100,000 – £109,999	2	2
£110,000 – £119,999	-	1
£120,000 – £129,999	1	-
	<u>14</u>	<u>13</u>

The key management personnel comprises the senior leadership team and the total cost of remuneration, benefits and pensions paid to them in the year was £897,000 (2024: £945,000).

Total employer pension contributions in the year for these staff members were £53,000 (2024: £55,000).

	2025 Number	2024 Number
The average number of employees by function, was:		
Charitable activity	80	74
Fundraising	8	8
Administration and Support	14	15
	<u>102</u>	<u>97</u>

The trustees have not received any remuneration or benefits in kind during the year (2024: £Nil).

	2025 Number	2024 Number
Number of trustees reimbursed expenses during the year	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>

The trustees received reimbursement of expenses during the year of less than £2,000 (2024: <£500).

Notes to the accounts

31 March 2025

5 Taxation

As a registered charity BookTrust is exempt from taxation on income arising from its charitable activities.

6 Intangible assets

At the 31 March 2025, BookTrust had incurred costs totalling £240,000 (2024: £nil) in the construction of a new website, which was still under development at the year end, therefore no amortisation has been charged. The new website went live on 14 April 2025.

7 Investments

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Fair value at the start of the year	3,451	4,319
Additions	-	1,006
Disposal proceeds	-	(1,827)
Net gain on change in investments fair value	65	148
Movement in cash balance	(3)	(195)
Fair value at the end of the year	<u>3,513</u>	<u>3,451</u>
Historical cost	<u>3,000</u>	<u>3,000</u>

Investment management charges totalled £18,000 (2024: £35,000)

8 Debtors

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	405	714
Other debtors	251	196
Prepayments and accrued income	755	537
	<u>1,411</u>	<u>1,447</u>

Notes to the accounts

31 March 2025

9 Creditors

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade creditors	445	350
Other taxes and social security	124	121
Accruals	375	180
Deferred income (note 12)	901	1,510
	1,845	2,161

10 Financial instruments

	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Financial assets		
Financial assets measured at amortised cost	2,493	3,161
Financial assets measured at fair value through profit or loss	3,512	3,451
	6,005	6,612
	2025	2024
	£'000	£'000
Financial liabilities		
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	821	530
	821	530

Financial assets measured at amortised cost include cash, trade receivables, other receivables excluding tax receivables, and accrued income.

Financial assets measured at fair value through profit or loss include investments in securities which are publicly traded.

Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost include trade payables and accruals.

Notes to the accounts

31 March 2025

11a Funds

	1 April 2024	Incoming resources	Resources used	Transfers between funds	Investment gains	31 March 2025
Unrestricted funds:						
General funds	6,005	10,332	(10,430)	187	65	6,159
Restricted funds:						
Raising donations	-	62	(62)	-	-	-
Strategic objective 1 and 2	75	907	(907)	(75)	-	-
Strategic objective 3	112	268	(268)	(112)	-	-
Strategic objective 4	-	378	(378)	-	-	-
Strategic objective 5	-	485	(485)	-	-	-
	187	2,100	(2,100)	(187)	-	-
	6,192	12,432	(12,530)	-	65	6,159

Income includes unrestricted income of £5,788,000 from Arts Council England in 2024/25 (2024: £5,763,000).

Unrestricted funds

Unrestricted funds stood at £6,159,000 at 31 March 2025 (2024: £6,005,000). These funds support working capital requirements, provide cover for risk management and are available for use at the discretion of the directors in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds

Restricted funds have been classified by the purposes for which they were received, and include all grants and donations where the conditions for recognition have been satisfied at the balance sheet date. The trustees have reviewed these funds and are satisfied that there are clear plans to deploy these funds for the purposes stipulated.

Notes to the accounts

31 March 2025

11b Prior year funds

	1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources used	Transfers between funds	Investment gains	31 March 2024
Unrestricted funds:						
General funds	5,875	10,259	(10,333)	56	148	6,005
Restricted funds:						
Raising donations	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strategic objective 1 and 2	109	796	(796)	(34)	-	75
Strategic objective 3	134	285	(285)	(22)	-	112
Strategic objective 4	-	463	(463)	-	-	-
Strategic objective 5	-	220	(220)	-	-	-
	243	1,764	(1,764)	(56)	-	187
	6,118	12,023	(12,097)	-	148	6,192

Notes to the accounts

31 March 2025

12 Deferred income

	Letterbox Club	Bookbuzz	Grant funding	Other sales invoices not yet delivered	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Balance at 1 April 2024	708	215	587	-	1,510
Released to incoming resources	(1,340)	(835)	(933)	(36)	(3,144)
Amount deferred in year	1,284	831	353	67	2,535
Balance as at 31 March 2025	652	211	7	31	901

Prior year deferred income

	Letterbox Club	Bookbuzz	Grant funding	Other sales invoices not yet delivered	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Balance at 1 April 2023	878	302	761	-	1,941
Released to incoming resources	(925)	(302)	(756)	-	(1,983)
Amount deferred in year	755	215	582	-	1,552
Balance as at 31 March 2024	708	215	587	-	1,510

Deferred income for Letterbox Club and Bookbuzz comprises of pack sales in advance of delivery.

Notes to the accounts

31 March 2025

13 Analysis of net assets between funds

	2025			2024		
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Net current assets	6,159	-	6,159	6,005	187	6,192
Net assets	6,159	-	6,159	6,005	187	6,192

14 Financial commitments

Financial commitments under non-cancellable operating leases will result in the following payments falling due:

	2025		2024	
	Land and buildings	Other	Land and buildings	Other
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Leases expiring in:				
Less than one year	380	-	596	2
One to five years	315	-	645	-
	695	-	1,241	2

Notes to the accounts

31 March 2025

15 Comparative statement of financial activity

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £'000	Restricted funds 2024 £'000	Total funds 2024 £'000
Income from:			
Statutory funding	5,763	898	6,661
Corporate partnerships	448	45	493
Individual giving	1,357	-	1,357
Trust and foundations	107	821	928
Traded activity	2,520	-	2,520
Investment dividends and interest	64	-	64
	10,259	1,764	12,023
Expenditure on:			
Raising donations	1,021	-	1,021
Charitable activities			
Strategic objectives 1 and 2	6,032	796	6,828
Strategic objective 3	1,409	285	1,694
Strategic objective 4	1,567	463	2,030
Strategic objective 5	304	220	524
	10,333	1,764	12,097
Net expenditure before gains on investments	(74)	-	(74)
Net gain on investments	148	-	148
Net income	74	-	74
Transfer between funds	56	(56)	-
Net movement in funds	130	(56)	74
Total funds brought forward	5,875	243	6,118
Total funds carried forward	6,005	187	6,192

Notes to the accounts

31 March 2025

16 Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others

BookTrust is the sole trustee of the Bessie Award Trust (established 1996) whose assets are held to support the Women's Prize for Fiction, one of the United Kingdom's most prestigious literary prizes, administered by the Women's Prize Trust (registered charity number 1181253). The objects for which the Women's Prize Trust exists relate to the advancement of the art of literature for the public benefit. This relates to BookTrust's promotion of reading and advocacy for national and local policies to recognise the social and economic importance of reading.

The assets held in this capacity were £250,000 plus accrued interest of £27,493. Since the maturity of the originally gifted long-term bond these funds were held in a separate deposit account with NatWest Bank, pending final details of transfer of the assets to the Women's Prize Trust. This has now all been paid over and the account closed. Given that BookTrust has no beneficial interest in these funds, they are not included in our financial statements.

17 Mohn Westlake Foundation

Diana Gerald, co-CEO of BookTrust, is also a trustee for the Mohn Westlake Foundation. In 2021/22 BookTrust was awarded a restricted grant with performance conditions from the Mohn Westlake Foundation for the periods 2022 to 2025 with a value of £1.7m over the three years and an advance payment of £nil (2024: £0.58m) included in creditors.

Diana is also co-chair/ trustee of EURead, a non-profit association in Belgium. BookTrust pays an annual subscription of €2,500.

18 Subsequent events

In March 2025, the charity signed a lease for a new office in Leeds, ahead of the current lease coming to the end of its term in June 2025. The new lease is for an initial 12 months, at an annual cost of £82,800.



Contact us

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