Word Up North Limited

Charity number 501801

A company limited by guarantee number 01061343

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the year ended 31 March 2026

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Word Up North Limited
Trustees' report for the year ended 31 March 2026

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

The trustees during the financial year and up to and including the date the report was approved were:

Name	Position	Dates
Catherine Baxandall		
John Dignum		Resigned 9 November 2025
Professor Frank Finlay	Chair	
Anita Ganeri		Appointed 24 September 2025
Robert Gibson		Appointed 14 April 2026
Professor Gregory Radick		
Tahira Sardar		Appointed 18 June 2025
Ellen Thorpe	Vice Chair	
Mary Margaret Katherine Wright (Kitty Wright)		

Company secretary Catherine Baxandall

Charity number 501801 Registered in England and Wales

Company number 01061343 Registered in England and Wales

Registered and principal address
2nd Floor Offices, Fairfax House,
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Bankers
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Independent examiner
Alan Dodd FCCA
West Yorkshire Community Accountancy Service CIO
Stringer House
34 Lupton Street
Leeds LS10 2QW

Structure, governance and management
The charity is a company limited by guarantee and was formed on 12 July 1972. The Charitable Company was known as Ilkley Literature Festival Limited until 11 April 2023. It is governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association as amended on 11 April 2023. The liability of the members in the event of the company being wound up is limited to a sum not exceeding £1. The trustees of the charity are also the directors for the purposes of company law.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

The Trustees are pleased to present their annual report together with the charity's financial statements for year ending 31st March 2026; these are also prepared to meet the Companies Act requirements for a directors' report and accounts.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Purpose and Aims

Our charitable purposes as set out in the objects contained in the Memorandum and Articles of Association are:

To foster and promote the maintenance, improvement and development of artistic taste and knowledge and the understanding and appreciation of literature and the other arts amongst the general public.

Today, in line with these original objectives:

Word Up North's mission is to raise up voices, stories and writers in the north of England. Our work fosters a love of reading, writing and creativity within individuals and communities, using the power of words to create positive change.

We achieve this by:

- **Producing vibrant, entertaining and thought-provoking live and online literature events**. Individuals and communities living in the north of England can engage with the work of a diverse range of contemporary writers and artists, from the UK and beyond.
- **Supporting writers' professional career development.** We provide opportunities for skills development, peer-to-peer collaboration, audience engagement and employment. Our programmes create career pathways for northern writers. We actively support people from backgrounds which are underrepresented within the literature sector.
- **Working with northern communities to produce inspiring cultural experiences which are relevant to our people and reflective of our places.** We strengthen connections, increase pride in place, improve confidence and raise aspirations.
- **Empowering children and young people through words.** We use story-led creative activities to improve communication skills, personal confidence, employability and community pride. Young people are encouraged to explore words to cultivate ideas and opinions, expand their horizons, and use their voices to effect change.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

We deliver our mission through four main areas of activities: New Writing and Talent Development; Live Literature Events; Creative Communities; and Children and Young People.

Activities delivered during 2025/26 included:

- ***Live Literature Events Programme***
  - **2025 Ilkley Literature Festival** involved 110 contemporary writers of fiction, non-fiction and poetry taking part in 90 events across 17 days. Over 13,800 tickets were sold.
  - **BBC Contains Strong Language Bradford 2025** – a four-day festival of poetry, performance and spoken word produced in partnership with the BBC and Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture. The festival played host to nearly 50 events, including nine BBC Radio broadcasts, attracting 6,017 ticket bookers.

- ***New Writing and Talent Development***
  - The third iteration of our **New Northern Poets** talent development programme, delivered in partnership with the University of Leeds Poetry Centre.
  - Dedicated **Poetry Day** at Ilkley Literature Festival 2025, including workshops, showcases and networking sessions.
  - Programme of **creative writing and professional development** workshops for writers, both online and in person.
  - **Free bursary places** are offered to applicants who would otherwise not participate due to financial limitations.

- ***Children & Young People***
  - **BBC Radio Club** - as part of the BBC Contains Strong Language 2025 Engagement Programme, we introduced students from three Keighley Secondary Schools to spoken word poetry and recorded their live performances for radio broadcast.
  - **You're Welcome** - as part of the BBC Contains Strong Language 2025 Engagement Programme, primary school students from three Bradford Schools of Sanctuary worked with a writer, artist and storyteller with lived experience of seeking asylum to welcome poems. These poems formed the basis of a sculpture exhibited at City Library Bradford.
  - **Save a Mate** –with Keighley youth centres we supported the youth-led development and production of a documentary film exploring the roots and causes of youth violence.
  - **K-Town Sound Machine** – working with a visual/sound production artist, a group of young people in Keighley created a mobile sound system on a bike, took part in music and lyric writing workshops, and performed live for their communities in an initiative to tackle anti-social behaviour.
  - **The Secret Life of Park Wood** helped the Friends of Park Wood and Parkwood Primary School co-create a story trail map for families to explore and enjoy this beautiful, local green space.
  - **Story Explorer Day** - a day of book-themed events for children and families presented in partnership with Skipton Town Hall and North Yorkshire Council's Culture Team.
  - **Keighley Young Writers -** weekly creative writing sessions for young people aged 12-18 led by professional writer Shabnam Ahsan.
  - **Story Explorer Group** - weekly creative reading and writing sessions at Keighley Library for children aged 7-12.

- ***Creative Communities***
  - **Word on the Street** – our ongoing asset-based approach to community engagement across in six hyperlocal areas of Keighley working in partnership with Bradford Metropolitan District Council's Keighley Neighbourhoods Team.
  - **Aireheads** – as part of BBC Contains Strong Language 2025 Engagement Programme we brought together three professional poets with three Bradford-based, nature-focused organisations to explore the powerful connection between words, well-being and the natural world.
  - **Bards of Bradford** - as part of Word Up North's BBC Contains Strong Language 2025 Engagement Programme, Bradford poet Nabeela Ahmed immersed herself in three communities in the city, Wyke, Lasiterdyke and Holmewood, going undercover on a mission as 'The Travelling Poet' to explore what poetry means to residents and to share and collect favourite verses and poems.
  - **Word Out** – the creation of a series of new poems by adults with learning disabilities and autism, delivered in partnership with charity Outside the Box and a live performance of the poems at BBC Contains Strong Language Festival 2025.

Public benefit

In shaping our objectives and planning our activities for the year, the Trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in managing the activities of the charity, including the guidance on public benefit and fee charging.

In setting the level of fees, charges and concessions, the Trustees consider the accessibility of events and participatory activities for those on low incomes, offering concessions for children and young people under 25, students, and people in receipt of disability, housing and unemployment benefits. Established community groups and schools are eligible for group concessions with free places for group leaders.

In 2025/26, fully funded places were made available for free across a range of writing development initiatives to emerging northern writers from backgrounds currently underrepresented in the cultural sector.

Contribution made by volunteers

79 volunteers supported the running of our Live Literature events programme in 2025. The total contribution of all volunteer hours was 773.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Live and Online Literature Events

BBC Contains Strong Language: Bradford 2025

Word Up North partnered with the BBC and Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture to produce the 2025 edition of BBC Contains Strong Language, a festival of contemporary poetry and spoken word commissions, performances and participatory events. The project consisted of two complementary activity strands, a year-long Engagement Programme (see pages 10-14) and a four-day live literature festival which took place 18-21 September 2025.

Featuring poets, spoken word artists, musicians, playwrights and presenters, the BBC Contains Strong Language 2025 festival played host to 49 events, from gala performances to panel discussions, workshops, and open mic events.

Nine events were broadcast for either live or subsequent broadcast on the BBC (Radio 4 and BBC Sounds). This represented 22% of the programmed events, and included *Front Row*, *Start the Week* and *Loose Ends*. The total estimated broadcast audience for BBC Contains Strong Language 2025 events was over 5 million in the UK and globally.

20 poets were contracted to be “Poets-in-Residence". This group included nationally established poets (Daljit Nagra, Imtiaz Dharker, Kate Fox, Zaffar Kunial) with fiercely talented spoken word artists and poets from Bradford and the wider West Yorkshire region. A highlight of the weekend was a musical performance from Manchester musician and poet Antony Szmierek. 6,017 tickets were booked for the 4-day festival. 93% of events were free to attend.

BBC Contains Strong Language reached new audiences for poetry and spoken word:

- 23% of attendees across CSL weekend were new to poetry
- 99% would attend again following their experience of CSL 2025
- 99% of those surveyed after CSL by BD25 rated the festival “Excellent” or “Good”

Sample audience feedback:

“The events have all been excellent. Really high-quality performances and content.”

“Enjoyed all events. Different voices and all ages. Ideas for future reading. Discovered local writers. Feel proud, interested, pleased and stimulated.”

“Very thought-provoking and made me think about other people's lives and how they live their lives so differently to my own.”

“I felt inspired to write poetry. I really enjoyed the poetry I heard and the event in general.”

“I laughed and cried; felt seen and heard. I loved hearing issues discussed that affected me deeply. Thank you.”

2025 Ilkley Literature Festival

The annual Ilkley Literature Festival took place 3-19 October 2025. The programme comprised of 90 ticketed events including were ten workshops. 12 events were also live streamed to audiences at home.

A total of 13,874 tickets were sold. The average house capacity for in person events was 77%. 33 in person events sold out.

The festival programme was wide ranging, with thematic strands weaving across fiction, non-fiction and poetry events. These included 'Doing Justice', 'Soft Power, 'In Verse', 'Food for Thought', 'The Dark Side of the Internet', 'Explore Moor: Connections, and 'Novel Ideas.

Highlights included interviews, talks and readings from novelists Irvine Welsh, Rachel Joyce, Esther Freud, Claire Adam, Sanam Mahloudji, Nussaibah Younis, Rachel Bower, Emilia Hart, Jess Kitching, Hanna Thomas Uose, Sophie Haydock and Stephen May; memoirists Jung Chang and Lee Lawrence; poets Simon Armitage, Andrew McMillan, Malika Booker, Jo Clement, Jo Farley, Charlotte Eichler, Maia Elsner, Zaffar Kunial and Matt Howard; beloved entertainers Michael Palin, Hugh Bonneville, Alan Davies, Tony Robinson and Gyles Brandreth; politicians, public figures and journalists Lady Hale, Thant Myint-U, Nick Clegg, Mary Portas, Vince Cable, Ben Chu, Yvonne Singh, Steve Richards, Edward Stourton, Jo Hamilton, Simon Hart, Patrick Maguire and Gabriel Pogrund; biographers Sonia and Valerie Waterhouse; Purnell; broadcasters Stuart Maconie and Mark Radcliffe; food writers Jay Rayner, Sabrina Ghayour and Ruby Tandoh; historians Nir Arielli, Gareth Russell, Sadiah Qureshi, Jack Ashby, Corinne Fowler, Simon Hall, Fern Riddell; art historians James Payne and James Fox; linguist Lorna Gibb; environmentalists Tony Juniper and Mike Berners-Lee; and scientists Anjana Khatwa and Tim Spector.

Audience satisfaction levels matched previous years, with 90% rating the overall experience as 'very good' or 'good'. 94% of respondents were likely to recommend the festival to family or friends.

Sample audience feedback:

'I enjoyed this event very much indeed. I have read Wild Swans many years ago. Jung Chang is an amazing presenter, and I loved her style as well as the personal stories and sociopolitical perspectives all brilliant. Must also give a shout-out to the interviewer [Dawn Cameron], who did an incredible job.'

'I've been coming to the literature festival for a great many years, but this year has been particularly good. There were lots of other events I would have liked to have been able to attend but the ones I did were all fascinating. I shall definitely attend again in future years.'

'It was something very different. We've not been to a literary festival before.'

'Fantastic speaker, interesting, entertaining. I've been to many ILF events and this was one of the best.'

'The fabulous breadth of subjects and speakers is your strength. And having talks etc throughout the day and evening allows me to drive over to attend. Every year there is at least one talk that I must get to!'

110 professional writers, poets and performers took part in ILF 2025. 30% of events featured writers with protected characteristics. 18% of writers taking part in ticketed events were of Global majority heritage or other ethnic background. 6% of the programme included professional writers identifying as disabled or neurodiverse.

Sample author/participant feedback:

James Payne: *"I just wanted to say thank you for including me and making me feel so welcome. Your team were all fantastic so please thank them too when you get a chance. The audience were lovely too, great questions, as was Yvette who was so well prepared - and it was a real bonus to sell SO many books on the day. I was chuffed! All round - a brilliant day…"*

Jess Kitching: *"I just wanted to reach out to say a huge thank you to the Ilkley Fest team for having me yesterday. The panel was a brilliant experience and everyone I met at the festival was lovely. Please pass on my thanks and appreciation to every staff member who was there - they were so helpful and did a brilliant job of making sure everything ran smoothly. Dawn was a brilliant host who asked thought provoking questions and handled the themes of the book with such care. I hope the rest of the festival goes well. If yesterday was anything to go by, I am sure it will be a huge success."*

Caroline Hawkridge on behalf of Simon Armitage: *"Please thank all concerned for the hard work behind scenes, especially when Simon was late for the soundcheck. As I was sent on ahead, as it were, I had the opportunity to meet Erica, Paula and Robbie at the helm and they were brilliant. I could see all the ushers and others at work too."*

Sir Tony Robinson: *"Sir Tony thought the festival event yesterday was brilliant. He really enjoyed himself and commented on how long the signing queue afterwards was! Thank you for looking after him, Louise and their guests."*

New Writing and Talent Development

2025 New Northern Poets (NNP)

A professional skills development programme for six new rising talents from the North of England, particularly those from backgrounds currently underrepresented in the cultural sector. The selected 2025 poets were Nóra Blascsók, Rachel Curzon, Nigeen Dara, Jamie Field, Vanessa Napolitano and Laura Strickland.

The programme aims to support new and emerging poetry talent by providing opportunities for poets to improve their practice, receive advice from professionals and join a network of poets on similar paths to help grow their confidence and experience.

Each New Northern Poet received one-to-one mentoring sessions with a poet from the University of Leeds Poetry Centre. Mentors included Charlotte Eichler, Maia Elsner, Matt Howard, Zaffar Kunial and John Whale. Alongside their mentoring, the New Northern Poets also participated in 3 x online workshops and received an Ilkley Literature Festival 'Poetry Day' Delegate Package, profile building opportunities, the opportunity to attend events and workshops for free during the festival and deliver a commission: host a New Northern Poets Podcast, online workshop or a poetry reading group.

"I really enjoyed the mentoring process and felt that [my mentor] offered something quite unique in terms of support for my poetry. Rather than critiquing individual poems, [they] also 'diagnosed' some more general habits, and offered suggestions for taking my work further." – Rachel Curzon

"I found the mentoring sessions extremely useful … My mentor taught me ways in which to edit, as editing was something I never really enjoyed doing before." – Nigeen Dara

"I particularly learned that I need to take more risks with my writing - for example, test the images in a more structured way and not be afraid of what other people might think!" – Laura Strickland

"Honestly, 18 October was magical! I loved meeting all the New Northern Poets - there was such good camaraderie. I enjoyed the workshop I attended, love the photos that were taken, and of course, the actual showcase was the highlight of the day. I felt so honoured to be reading with such talented poets. The networking is a lovely way to end the day, too. It felt really special." – Vanessa Napolitano

Poetry Day at Ilkley Literature Festival 2025

On Saturday 18 October we delivered a day of poetry events and activities. This included four workshops, led by Peter and Ann Sansom, Antony Dunn, Maia Elsner and Charlotte Eichler; one Poetry Corner Reading Group hosted by New Northern Poets Jamie Field and Rachel Curzon; four poetry showcases with a total of 15 contributors and a poetry networking session.

The Poetry Day encouraged deeper audience engagement with poetry and further developed Word Up North's growing poetry community/network.

Creative writing and professional development workshops

In May 2025, poets John Whale and Matt Howard led an intensive day-long nature writing workshop at Nell Bank Outdoor Centre in Wharfedale. The schedule interposed creating writing exercises with time spent immersed in, and closely observing, the natural environment.

The 2025 Ilkley Literature festival programme included eight workshops covering poetry, fiction writing and professional practice for writers.

Between January and March 2026, we hosted six online workshops. Three were led by 2025 New Northern Poets as part of their professional development, the other three were led by experienced professional writers Andrew Michael Hurley on folk horror fiction, Shahnaz Ahsan on food writing, and Liz Hyder on writing Young Adult fiction.

Poet John Whale, editor of Stand magazine and Director of the University of Leeds Poetry Centre, provided five one-to-one sessions offering professional feedback and editorial advice on participants' work.

Our workshop programmes provided creative writing development to 136 writers. 20 writers received free bursary places.

Children & Young People

BBC Radio Club

In September 2025 the BBC Contains Strong Language festival, the UK's biggest festival of spoken word and poetry, came to Bradford as part of the Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture celebrations. Word Up North were delighted to be the chosen local literature delivery partner, co-producing the four-day festival and delivering a year-long programme of engagement projects to encourage Bradfordians to enjoy, create and engage with poetry.

One of these projects was the BBC Radio Club, a project that runs annually alongside the festival. The project offers a chance for secondary school pupils to work with professional poets and BBC producers so they can be inspired to create their own original poetry and learn more about what a role in media and radio production might look like.

We worked with 35 Year 7 and 8 pupils from three schools in Keighley, Beckfoot Oakbank, Carlton Keighley and Holy Family Catholic School each of whom had the chance to create work with a professional poet/spoken word artist, an opportunity to record their poems professionally with BBC radio producers and also visit the Look North Studios in Leeds to learn more about careers in media.

Students also performed their poems at the festival on stage at St George's Hall in an event hosted by the professional poets, Testament, Wilko Wilkes and Saju Ahmed.

You're Welcome

As part of Word Up North's BBC Contains Strong Language 2025 Engagement Programme, three Bradford primary schools with 'Schools of Sanctuary' status took part in a creative project to celebrate what it means to be and feel welcome in the city. Students from Years 5 and 6 worked with poet Rachel Bower and singer and storyteller Furaha Mussanzi to explore words, images and experiences that foster a culture of welcome. Furaha herself came to Bradford as a sanctuary seeker when a child.

During Refugee Week, participating students took part in a creative poetry workshop exploring the theme of welcome and sharing what kinds of things make them feel welcome including food, music, gestures of kindness and games. They worked together to create a number of short poems and poetic images which Rachel Bower curated into one collective poem.

The students then worked with visual artist Emma Denby to create a kinetic sculpture design inspired by coir welcome mats, entitled You're Welcome, which presented the poem in a tactile way. They created stencils and printed images to represent their ideas of what welcome means and added these to the design. The sculpture was installed in Bradford City Library and unveiled at the BBC Contains Strong Language festival for visitors to enjoy.

Save a Mate

Word Up North worked with 32 young people attending youth centres and other local settings in Keighley to develop a youth-led documentary film exploring the roots and causes of youth violence. The project involved conversations about friendships, what they mean to young people, how small things can escalate into violence, and how to stop this occurring. The final edited film was screened for the participants at Keighley Young People's Centre in April 2025. This project was delivered in partnership with The Unit, Keighley Youth Service, James UK Keighley and Highfield Community Centre and funded by West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

K-Town Sound Machine

Working with the Keighley Neighbourhoods Team, the Youth Service, Bradford 2025 and young people in the Braithwaite, Highfield and Lund Park areas of Keighley, we created a bike-mounted mobile sound machine which toured Keighley across the summer of 2025. The Sound Machine was used to engage young people in ad hoc, site-specific DJing, rap, spoken word activity and workshops, reaching marginalised young people not currently accessing support provision. A young people's steering group worked together to shape and deliver activity at a music event at Bradford 2025's touring venue 'The Beacon' at Cliffe Castle on Saturday 19 July. The project was funded by West Yorkshire Combined Authority and shared feedback and learnings with Keighley's local Police and the Neighbourhoods Team to inform their strategies to tackle anti-social behaviour.

The Secret Life of Park Wood

Following a successful heritage project collecting memories and stories connected to the woodland, the Friends of Park Wood wanted to find new ways to engage children and young families with this valued community space. We worked with members of the Friends group and Bradford Arts Centre's Arts and Heritage Officer (based at Keighley

Creative) to co-create a family-friendly woodland trail inspired by the idea that children can see the magic adults often miss – 'the secret life' of a space.

Artists Lisa Holmes from Photo Hub North CIC and illustrator Nicola Storr led creative workshops combining local history, storytelling, illustration and photography. Year 3 pupils from Parkwood Primary School explored the woodland with a local volunteer from the Friends group, learning about the area's history and wildlife while documenting their favourite places through photography. Using the children's ideas, the group created original stories imagining the hidden creatures and magical happenings that only young people can see — building a new collection of woodland folklore rooted in local imagination.

The children's photographs, stories and illustrations were brought together into a beautifully illustrated trail map by Nicola Storr, giving families an exciting new way to explore Park Wood together. The trail was launched through local community events across the summer, encouraging more families to connect with nature, discover local heritage and experience the woodland through creativity and play.

Story Explorer Day, Skipton

We presented a day of events for children and families in partnership with Skipton Town Hall and North Yorkshire Council's Culture Team on Sunday 1 March 2025. Events and activities included Mad Hatter themed crafting sessions, interactive events with bestselling children's author Anna James and Kate Pankhurst, shadow puppet making and Winnie-the-pooh storytelling workshops and a spine-chilling performance by Gav Cross giving well-known fairy tales a terrible twist! 348 children and family members attended events and/or took part in activities.

In the three weeks leading up to Story Explorer Day, we joined forces with HarperCollins to host a Winnie-the-Pooh themed book trail around Skipton. The team at Skipton BID coordinated the involvement of 10 local businesses who kindly put book trail boards in their shop windows. Over 100 forms were completed.

Skipton Library supported the day with two free drop-in activities and storytelling sessions. They also ran a Re-imagine a Classic Character art competition with author Anna James judging and selecting the winning entries.

Story Explorer Group, Keighley Library

The group regularly attracts 10-12 young people aged 7-12 years. Over the spring term the group explored writing, storytelling and craft activities connected to the book *Alice with a Why* by Anna James, who also participated in the Story Explorer Day on Sunday 1 March. The group also revisited classic children's literature and were offered free tickets to Anna's event at Story Explorer Day in Skipton, giving them the opportunity to get their book signed by the author. Group members also joined in with library author visits and took part in opportunities to experience more storytellers/authors in their community.

Young Writers Group, Keighley Library

Over the year, 10-14 young writers aged 12-18 years regularly attended our weekly creative writing sessions. They have explored a variety of writing styles, expanding their repertoire. On 21 February 2025, they enjoyed a session on multilingual poems and poems about language to mark International Mother Language Day.

At the end of the autumn term, the group supported the launch of the BBC Radio Club Exhibition at Keighley Library. They put into practice newly acquired skills in event management, shared some of their poetry and advocated for the Young Writers group to visitors. The event was a great success, with 53 people attending the launch.

At the end of the spring term, we collated feedback which highlighted the group's impact on the member's writing skills, confidence, mental health and wellbeing.

Member Feedback:

"Young Writers is sort of like a safe haven. Everyone is really funny and kind and they help me improve my writing."

"It's one of the best parts of the week for me and I love every minute. It has helped my confidence because I find it easier to make friends with people and I like reading stuff out now. It's quite useful having this time, this designated time for writing."

"I want to do something with writing when I am older and being in this group means I can get feedback from people who are in the same mindset as me."

"I loved having the opportunity to do the showcase where we read out our work and do other things related to writing that I wouldn't have tried out otherwise."

Creative Communities

Word on the Street

Our ongoing asset-based approach to community engagement across in six hyperlocal areas of Keighley delivered in partnership with Bradford Metropolitan District Council's Keighley Neighbourhoods Team including the following activities during 2025-26:

- Supporting the Friends of Parkwood group with their heritage project, collecting memories of residents and exploring how to creatively share these within their community.
- The Strong Hold Close Residents group, set up as result of our Word on The Street pilot project in 2023, continued to go from strength to strength holding year-round activities within their community. This active group are currently exploring the idea of developing their own community garden.
- Working alongside the Neighbourhoods Team, East Riddlesden Hall and other community partners we mobilised the local community of Stockbridge. Residents were supported to develop a creative element for a new Eid Mini Mela picnic event. This took place on Saturday 21 June. The interactive exhibition captured memories, reflections and stories of residents. The aim has been to use this as a catalyst to bring together a constituted resident's group who will deliver their own cultural events in their community.
- St Michael's Centre is a new community space in Bracken Bank. We have been using creativity to engage with local people, encouraging them to build a relationship with the new space and contribute to its development. During 2025-26 this work was conducted in partnership with Bradford Arts Centre's Arts and Heritage Officer seconded to Keighley Creative.

Aireheads

A part of Word Up North's BBC Contains Strong Language 2025 Engagement Programme, 'Aireheads' sought to explore how expressing our experiences of nature and the outdoors through words can support positive mental

health and spark creativity. Three poets-in-residence spent the summer of 2025 in three community green spaces, taking part in walks, gardening activities, workshops and delivering impromptu creative writing activities.

The residencies gave both poets and participants space to learn with, and from, each other. Each poet spent time 'in the wild', walking alongside members, users, volunteers and staff of Bradford community groups and services that specialise in making the most of local green spaces.

The poets were then tasked with creating a reflective piece of writing inspired by their experiences and encounters. They also curated writing prompts and work generated by participants during the course of the project.

The project culminated in the creation of an 'Aireheads' booklet which was launched at the BBC Contains Strong Language Festival. The booklet brings together reflective pieces of writing by both poets and participants, acting as a catalyst for further exploration of nature, creativity, and the language of well-being.

Alongside the writing, the booklet included prompts and suggestions for readers, encouraging people to think about how they might begin generating poetry in their own local green spaces. The booklet was shared with our project partners, the Bradford 2025 Creative Health Network, and their wider networks, extending the project's reach and impact.

Bards of Bradford

Working with Bradford Libraries as part of Word Up North's BBC Contains Strong Language 2025 Engagement Programme, we focused on three areas of the Bradford District identified by the libraries service as places in which they wanted to deepen connections with their local communities - Laisterdyke, Wyke and Holme Wood. They also wanted to understand local people's experience of, and relationship to, poetry with a view to promoting and developing their poetry resources and activities.

Poet Nabeela Ahmed spent the summer of 2025 going undercover on a mission as 'The Travelling Poet.' She wandered streets, visited local libraries, community centres, cafés, shops and businesses, meeting Bradfordians old and new and sharing conversations about their lives, the areas they call home and their experiences of, and relationships with, poetry. She also conducted impromptu poetry workshops, responding to individuals and groups.

During these visits Nabeela collected quotes – people's thoughts and reflections or snatches of their favourite poems (remembered or self-penned) – and helped people to write and share their own poetry, sometimes for the first time. These collected conversations, interactions, poems and quotes were curated by Nabeela and used to create a unique piece of Doodle artwork by artist Scott Walker of Doodlejam. The result was an interactive drawing installation in The Broadway Shopping Centre during the BBC Contains Strong Language festival in September 2025. Aimed at families, the Bards of Bradford Doodle Wall enabled us to chart and share Nabeela's journeys and conversations as well as encourage more poetry-based conversations and reflections as children and adults added their own responses to the wall in real time. An accompanying exhibition was also created, showcasing Nabeela's travels and some of the original poems collected from Bradford residents.

Word Out

Over six months, poet Chris Singleton from arts organisation Brave Words ran poetry and creative writing workshops inspiring members of Outside The Box, an independent charity that supports adults with learning disabilities and/or autism living in the Bradford District, to express their own stories in a safe, encouraging and supportive environment. The participants wrote pieces inspired by the theme of 'identity', exploring facets of their own personalities, experiences and perceptions of the world and resulting in an eclectic mix of poetic and performance

styles. They worked with Chris to hone their performance skills, learning about performance poetry techniques and sharpening their own original 'voices'.

On the 20 September 2025 they took part in a sharing event at Bradford City Library, as part of BBC Contains Strong Language, performing their work and expressing their feelings about their identities.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

The governing document of the charity is the Memorandum and Articles of Association establishing the company as a company limited by guarantee under company legislation.

The charity's name was changed from Ilkley Literature Festival Limited by special resolution by unanimous written consent of the trustees on 1 April 2023.

The original Memorandum and Articles were dated 12 July 1972. The charity adopted new Articles of Association on 31 July 2013. These were subsequently updated on the 11 April 2023.

The charity is registered in England & Wales with the Charity Commission in England & Wales (CCEW) with charity number 501801.

By operation of law all trustees are directors under the Companies Act 2006 and all directors are trustees under Charities legislation and have responsibilities, as such, under both company and charity legislation.

Our Trustees

The Board of Trustees, which must number between 3 and 15 members, administers the charity. The trustees are all individuals and offer their services on a voluntary basis.

The Board of Trustees meets at least four times a year with extra meetings held when necessary. The Board elects a Chair, Vice-Chair, Trustee with Special Responsibility for Finance and Secretary from among the trustees. The Board of Trustees may constitute committees for specific purposes from time to time, and has constituted a standing Finance Committee, which includes the Chair and Trustee with Special Responsibility for Finance, to deal with detailed financial matters, and a standing HR Committee, which includes the Vice-Chair and deals with staffing and recruitment policies and procedures. The Finance Committee meets before each board meeting, while the HR Committee meets periodically when required.

The present Board of Trustees incorporates a wide and diverse range of experience, expertise and skills necessary to effectively lead and manage the charity with trustees having a broad knowledge and skills base including: arts and cultural sector; law; financial strategy and risk management; and teaching and higher education.

Our policy is to ensure that the Board of Trustees is representative of the diversity of West Yorkshire and the wider population of the UK and that the composition of the Board appropriately reflects the scope of our operations, and the needs of our communities, audiences and stakeholders.

We aim to increase our pool of potential trustees to ensure that we deliver on this commitment and address any skills and expertise gaps that may emerge because of retirements/resignations from the Board. We openly communicate opportunities for Board involvement and trustee recruitment and have a clear procedure for recruiting and selecting potential new trustees.

Trustee Induction and Training
Potential trustees are invited to attend a board meeting as an observer prior to being invited to become a trustee. New trustees meet with the Chair of the Board and receive a comprehensive induction pack that includes details of their legal obligations and duties. They are also provided with appropriate induction and training, including briefing sessions by the Senior Management Team. The Board of Trustees holds annual away days to address training needs and the charity's strategic aims.

Organisational Structure
The Trustees are responsible for the strategic direction, leadership, management and policy of the charity. The Trustees are supported in their work by the Chief Executive Officer & Creative Director, who in turn manages a small staff team of between 4-6 employees. The CEO works to agreed levels of delegated authority reporting to the Board of Trustees. The CEO and Executive Director form the executive Senior Leadership Team.

We continually monitor the organisation's structure and staffing to ensure that we have the right resources, skills and expertise to deliver our charitable objects.

Pay and Remuneration of the Charity's Key Management Personnel
The pay and remuneration of key management personnel is agreed by the Board of Trustees during the annual budgeting process. Pay is benchmarked against similar jobs in the arts and charitable sectors regionally.

Wider networks
During 2025/26 Word Up North worked closely with key strategic partners including: Bradford Metropolitan District Council, the BBC, Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture and The University of Leeds.

Relationships between the charity and related parties
The charity has a close relationship with Arts Council England and is currently part of its National Portfolio of funded organisations. The organisation nominates an observer to the Board of Trustees and provides funding to enable the charity to carry out its charitable objectives. The charity received revenue core funding grants amounting to £142,206 (2024-25: £139,953) from Arts Council England during the year.

Relationships with other groups, charities and individuals
Valuable partnerships this year included the Bradford Theatres, Bradford Libraries, Bradford Arts Centre, Bradford MDC Keighley Neighbourhoods Team, Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust Green Therapy Team, Bradford Schools of Sanctuary, Keighley Creative, Outside The Box, National Poetry Centre, Poetry School, Keighley Youth Service, West Yorkshire Police, West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The company showed a net deficit on operations for the year of £2,787, comprising a surplus of £66,425 on unrestricted funds, and a deficit of £69,212 on restricted funds.

Principal Funding Sources

During the year, the company's principal sources of income were grants from Arts Council England and Bradford Metropolitan District Council, sponsorship and subscriptions, and earned income from ticket sales.

Grants from public bodies – DCMS/Arts Council England and Bradford Metropolitan District Council totalled £322,456 (2024/25: £242,653), representing 58% of total income (2024/25: 49%).,

Grants from recurring sources totalled £162,206 (2024/25: £154,953) and non-recurring sources £160,913 (2024/25: £101,363).

In the financial year ended 31 March 2026, events income from ticket sales to live literature events and other associated income was £189,224 (2024/25: £184,820).

Reserves Policy

The Trustees' policy is that the charity should have sufficient unrestricted reserves to enable it to meet its financial obligations as and when they fall due without prejudicing the ability of the charity to raise funding and commit expenditure to its objectives.

The Trustees have carefully considered the financial obligations of the charity and have determined a reserves policy that is aimed at protecting a minimum reserve whilst managing funds to ensure that they are appropriately used to support the charity's aims. The policy is reviewed on an annual basis with the most recent review undertaken on 16 March 2026.

The lower level of reserves is now set at £53,000, representing approximately three months' worth of contracted costs.

The upper level is set at £90,000 representing the projected unrestricted funds that the charity requires, based on a review of the budget for the forthcoming year and the risks associated with the delivery of that budget.

Unrestricted reserves, excluding fixed assets, at 31 March 2026 were £128,517 (31 March 2025: £66,201). This is above the target range. The Board created a Designated reserve post-year end of £24,593 for investment in the management structure and capacity of the organisation.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Trustees are responsible for the charity's risk strategy and appetite and employ a formal risk management process. This includes:

- an annual review of the principal risks and uncertainties that the charity faces;
- the establishment of policies, systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the annual review; and

RISK MANAGEMENT (ctd)

- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

In addition, the Finance Sub-Committee has been granted devolved responsibility to lead on the development and oversight of risk management strategies and procedures as a standing agenda item at its quarterly meetings.

Operational risks are managed by ensuring robust policies and procedures are in place, and by appropriate training for staff and volunteers working in all relevant areas.

Risks and uncertainties facing the charity

The current period of Arts Council England (ACE) National Portfolio Funding has been extended until March 2028. Whilst this means continued funding stability until that time, it also means our ACE funding will remain near to standstill, having been increased by only 8.7% since 2016/17. The rate of UK inflation over the same period is 41.4%.

Competition for funding from other grant-giving bodies is exceptionally high with demand significantly outstripping the amounts available.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

We will continue to embed Word Up North's reputation within the cultural sector as a leading literature organisation within the north of England, using the success of BBC Contains Strong Language Bradford 2025 as evidence that we are able to produce high profile, complex projects and work effectively as a deliver partner alongside organisations of national significance.

Our asset-based approach to community engagement and our pioneering partnership with the Bradford Council's Neighbours Team in Keighley will be recognised as an exemplar of innovative, ethical and impactful practice.

Our live literature programme, with the annual Ilkley Literature Festival at its centre, will continue to experiment with formats and programme choices to grow audiences and readers for creative works of fiction and poetry, and create thriving communities which bring readers and writers together.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for the year. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Adhere to agreed procedures for managing conflicts of interest;
- State whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence 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 the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (Charities SORP (FRS102)), and in accordance with the special provisions of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Financial Statements and Independent Review

In line with recommended best practice from the Charity Commission, the charity's financial statements for year ending 31 March 2026 have been subject to Independent Review and approved by a fully qualified Independent Examiner.

This report was approved by the Board of Trustees on 23rd September 2026.



Professor Frank Finlay

Chair of the Board, Director and Trustee
Word Up North Limited

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Word Up North Limited

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charitable company for the year ended 31 March 2026 which are set out on pages 21 to 33.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the charitable company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the charitable company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charitable company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act.

I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of ACCA which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities [applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)].

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

Signed:  Name: Alan Dodd FCCA

Relevant professional qualification or body: FCCA Date: 22 October 2026

West Yorkshire Community Accountancy Service CIO
Stringer House, 34 Lupton Street
Leeds
LS10 2QW

Word Up North Limited
Statement of Financial Activities
(including summary income and expenditure account)
for the year ended 31 March 2026

	Notes	2026 Unrestricted funds £	2026 Restricted funds £	2026 Total funds £	2025 Total funds £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	(2)	28,343	1,300	29,643	19,969
Charitable activities	(3)	351,858	166,205	518,063	456,578
Other trading activity	(4)	10,780	-	10,780	15,030
Investment income		2	-	2	2
Total income		390,983	167,505	558,488	491,579
Expenditure on:					
Cost of raising funds	(5)	6,128	-	6,128	5,028
Charitable activities expenditure	(6)	321,237	233,910	555,147	386,063
Total expenditure		327,365	233,910	561,275	391,091
Net income / (expenditure)		63,618	(66,405)	(2,787)	100,488
Transfers between funds		2,807	(2,807)	-	-
Net movement in funds		66,425	(69,212)	(2,787)	100,488
Fund balances brought forward		67,471	90,410	157,881	57,393
Fund balances carried forward	(7)	133,896	21,198	155,094	157,881

All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

Word Up North Limited
Balance Sheet
as at 31 March 2026

	Notes	2026 Unrestricted £	2026 Restricted £	2026 Total £	2025 Total £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	(8)	5,379	-	5,379	1,270
Total fixed assets		5,379	-	5,379	1,270
Current assets					
Debtors and prepayments	(9)	16,094	-	16,094	10,753
Cash at bank and in hand	(10)	123,972	21,198	145,170	168,098
Total current assets		140,066	21,198	161,264	178,851
Current liabilities: amounts falling due within one year					
Creditors and accruals	(11)	11,549	-	11,549	22,240
Total current liabilities		11,549	-	11,549	22,240
Net current assets / (liabilities)		128,517	21,198	149,715	156,611
Net assets		133,896	21,198	155,094	157,881
Funds					
Unrestricted funds		133,896	-	133,896	67,471
Restricted funds		-	21,198	21,198	90,410
Total funds		133,896	21,198	155,094	157,881

For the year ending 31 March 2026 the charitable company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the charitable company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476. The trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and with FRS 102 (effective January 2019).

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on:

Date: 23rd September 2026

Signed:  **Name of signatory:** Professor Frank Finlay (Director and Trustee)

Word Up North Limited
Statement of cash flows
For the year ended 31 March 2026

	2026	2025
	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	(16,657)	97,899
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Bank interest	2	2
Purchase of tangible fixed assets (excluding donated assets)	(6,273)	(1,135)
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	(6,271)	(1,133)
Cash flows from financing activities:		
Repayments on borrowing	-	-
Cash inflows from new borrowing	-	-
Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities	-	-
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period	(22,928)	96,766
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	168,098	71,332
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	145,170	168,098

	2026	2025
Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from	£	£
Net movement in funds for the reporting period (as per the statement on financial activities)	(2,787)	100,488
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	2,164	821
Bank interest	(2)	(2)
Loan interest	-	-
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(5,341)	(3,883)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(10,691)	475
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	(16,657)	97,899

	2026	2025
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents	£	£
Cash in hand	145,170	168,098
Total cash and cash equivalents	145,170	168,098

Word Up North Limited

Notes to the accounts
for the year ended 31 March 2026

1. Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) and with the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

There has been no change to the accounting policies since last year.

No changes have been made to the accounts for previous years.

Going concern

The trustees are satisfied that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the charity becomes entitled to the resources; it is more likely than not that the trustees will receive the resources; and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Grants and donations

Grants and donations are only included in the SOFA when the charity has unconditional entitlement to the resources.

Where grants are related to performance and specific deliverables, they are accounted for as the charity earns the right to consideration by its performance.

Donated assets, facilities or services are valued at their estimated value to the charity. This is the price that the charity estimates it would pay in the open market for equivalent items; or services and facilities of equivalent utility to the charity.

Expenditure and liabilities

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out the resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

Taxation

As a charity the organisation benefits from rates relief and is generally exempt from corporation tax but not from VAT. Irrecoverable VAT is included in the cost of those items to which it relates.

1. Accounting policies (continued)

Tangible fixed assets
Tangible fixed assets costing more than £500 are capitalised and included at cost including any incidental expenses of acquisition. Gifted assets are shown at the value to the charity on receipt.

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost on a straight-line basis over their expected useful economic lives as follows:

Project and office equipment: over 4 years
Computer equipment: over 3 years

Pensions
The charity operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of its employees. The costs of contributions are recognised in the year they are payable.

Fund accounting
Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

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

Leases
Rents under operating leases are charged on a straight line basis over the lease term or to an earlier date if the lease can be determined without financial penalty.

2. Donations and legacies	2026 Unrestricted funds £	2026 Restricted funds £	2026 Total funds £	2025 Total funds £
Donations	4,011	1,300	5,311	2,969
Gift Aid	4,466	-	4,466	2,511
Members subscriptions	19,866	-	19,866	14,489
	28,343	1,300	29,643	19,969

3. Charitable activities income	2026 Unrestricted funds £	2026 Restricted funds £	2026 Total £	2025 Total £
Grants for Charitable activities				
Arts Council England	142,206	-	142,206	139,953
Arts Council England - CSL	-	68,000	68,000	85,000
Bradford Culture Company Ltd - CSL	-	70,000	70,000	-
City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council	20,000	-	20,000	15,000
BMDC – K Town Sound Machine	-	21,750	21,750	1,500
Bramall Trust	-	-	-	5,000
The Leap	-	663	663	663
BMDC – Radio Club		500	500	-
Leeds University - CAKE	-	-	-	400
BMDC – Creative Learning	-	-	-	200
BMDC – Word on the Street	-	-	-	600
Sir George Martin Trust	-	-	-	3,000
Leeds Community Foundation/Give Bradford	-	-	-	5,000
Events income	183,932	5,292	189,224	184,820
Young People income	1,825	-	1,825	2,769
New writing and talent development	3,695	-	3,695	11,523
Community Engagement	200	-	200	1,150
	351,858	166,205	518,063	456,578

4. Other trading activity

	2026 Unrestricted funds	2026 Restricted funds	2026 Total	2025 Total
	£	£	£	£
Sponsorship and advertising	10,780	-	10,780	15,030
	10,780	-	10,780	15,030

5. Cost of raising funds

		2026 Unrestricted funds	2026 Restricted funds	2026 Total	2025 Total
		£	£	£	£
Salaries, NIC and pension	12	3,333	-	3,333	3,528
Direct cost of raising funds		2,795	-	2,795	1,500
		6,128	-	6,128	5,028

6. Charitable activities expenditure

	2026 Activities undertaken directly	2026 Support costs	2026 Total	2025 Total
	£	£	£	£
	537,341	17,806	555,14	386,06

6a. Support costs

Support cost type		2026 £	2025 £
Salaries, NIC and pension	12	6,597	7,137
Freelance staff and other staff costs		6,905	7,293
Administrative expenses		2,230	1,356
Governance		330	-
Independent Examination		1,706	1,656
Bank charges		38	143
		17,806	17,585

6b. Charitable activities expenditure detail

		2026 Unrestricted funds	2026 Restricted funds	2026 Total cost	2025 Total cost
		£	£	£	£
Salaries, NIC and pension	12	149,165	19,474	168,639	159,899
Freelance staff and other staff costs		10,250	27,473	37,723	16,691
Event costs		98,424	118,220	216,644	100,555
Box office costs		11,371	-	11,371	11,613
Young People costs		8,343	5,504	13,847	13,222
New writing and talent development costs		7,278	-	7,278	12,453
Community costs		-	13,834	13,834	3,041
Contributed income costs		550	-	550	492
Marketing costs		32,629	18,544	51,173	32,841
Premises costs		15,535	-	15,535	16,554
Administrative expenses		11,155	-	11,155	13,561
Other overheads		4,565	669	5,234	4,320
Depreciation		2,164	-	2,164	821
Management Charge		(30,192)	30,192	-	-
Total expenditure		321,237	233,910	555,147	386,063

7. Restricted funds	Balance b/f	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	Balance c/f
	£	£	£	£	£
BMDC – Creative learning	195	-	-	-	195
Leeds Community Foundation/Give Bradford	5,340	-	(3,750)	-	1,590
Arts Council England - CSL	76,054	68,000	(139,281)	(2,807)	1,966
Bradford Culture Company Ltd - CSL	-	70,000	(70,000)	-	-
Event Income - CSL	-	5,292	(5,292)	-	-
BMDC – ASB Prevention Work	200	-	(200)	-	-
BMDC – Word on the Street	600	-	-	-	600
BMDC – K Town Sound Machine	-	21,750	(12,622)		9,128
Liz and Terry Bramall Trust	5,000	-	-	-	5,000
BMDC – Radio Club	-	500	(461)		39
The Leap	663	663	(1,292)	-	33
Sir George Martin Trust	2,359	-	(1,012)	-	1,347
Ilkley Book Club	-	1,000	-	-	1,000
Other donations	-	300	-	-	300
	90,411	167,505	(233,910)	(2,807)	21,198

7. Restricted funds (ctd)

BMDC – Creative learning	Grant funding to support Creative Learning activities
Leeds Community Foundation/Give Bradford	Manjit Wolstenholme Trust grant funding for Keighley Young Writers
Arts Council England - CSL	Contains Strong Language (CSL) 2025 festival of poetry and performance
Bradford Culture Company Ltd - CSL	Contains Strong Language (CSL) 2025 festival of poetry and performance
Event Income - CSL	Ticket sales relating to a CSL event
BMDC – ASB Prevention Work	Grant funding to support youth engagement and anti-social behaviour prevention
BMDC – Word on the Street	Grant funding to support Creative Learning activities
BMDC – K Town Sound Machine	Grant funding to support Creative Learning activities
Liz and Terry Bramall Trust	Grant funding to support Creative Learning activities
BMDC – Radio Club	Grant funding to support Creative Learning activities
The Leap	Grant funding held for young person to deliver Doodle Diaries project
Sir George Martin Trust	Grant funding to support Word on the Street (Creative Communities)
Ilkley Book Club	Donation to support Story Explorers provision
Other donations	Contributions to Creative Learning activities

Arts Council England - CSL

Transfer relates to the purchase of capitalised equipment which is available for general use within the charity

8. Tangible assets

	Office Equipment	Furniture and Fixtures	Total
Cost			£
At 1 April 2025	26,611	11,959	38,570
Assets written off	(11,497)	(4,436)	(15,933)
Additions	660	5,613	6,273
At 31 March 2026	15,774	13,136	28,910
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2025	25,553	11,747	37,300
Assets written off	(11,497)	(4,436)	(15,933)
Charge for year	988	1,176	2,164
At 31 March 2026	15,044	8,487	23,531
Net book value			
At 31 March 2026	730	4,649	5,379
At 31 March 2025	1,058	212	1,270

9. Debtors and prepayments

	2026	2025
	£	£
Debtors	1,250	500
Prepayments	14,844	10,253
	16,094	10,753

10. Cash at bank and in hand

	2026	2025
	£	£
Current account	144,859	165,931
Savings account	132	130
Cash in hand	179	2,037
	145,170	168,098

11. Creditors and accruals

	2026	2025
	£	£
Accruals and deferred income	8,032	18,863
PAYE, NI	3,517	3,377
	11,549	22,240

12. Staff costs and numbers

	2026	2025
	£	£
Gross salaries	158,866	150,811
Social security costs	9,327	9,107
Pensions	3,780	3,509
	171,973	163,427

The average number of employees during the year was 5.7, being an average of 4.7 full time equivalent (2025: 5.7, 4.6 FTE).

	2026	2025
	£	£
Freelance and other staff costs	37,723	16,691

Defined contribution pension scheme	2026	2025
	£	£
Costs of the scheme to the charity for the year	3,780	3,509

13. Related Party Transactions

Trustee expenses

No trustee received any expenses during this year or the previous year in performance of their duties.

Trustee remuneration and benefits

No trustee received any remuneration or benefit during this or the previous year.

Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the charity comprises the Director and Partnerships & Operations Director. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £85,722 (2025: £80,472).

Ilkley Literature Festival Limited (13943739) is a dormant company with Directors who are also Directors of Word Up North Limited.

14. Independent Examiner

	2026	2025
	£	£
Independent Examiner's Fee	1,706	1,656

15. Operating leases

Expected future minimum lease payments over the remaining life of the lease, analysed into the period in which the commitment expires:

	2026	restated 2025
	£	£
Within one year	7,800	7,800
In the second to fifth years inclusive	-	7,800
Over five years from the balance sheet date	-	-
	7,800	15,600

Word Up North Ltd

Statement of Financial Activities including comparatives for all funds
(including summary income and expenditure account)
for the year ended 31 March 2026

	2026 Unrestricted funds £	2025 Unrestricted funds £	2026 Restricted funds £	2025 Restricted funds £	2026 Total funds £	2025 Total funds £
Income from:						
Donations and legacies	28,343	19,969	1,300	-	29,643	19,969
Charitable activities	351,858	355,215	166,205	101,363	518,063	456,578
Other trading activity	10,780	15,030	-	-	10,780	15,030
Investment income	2	2	-	-	2	2
Total income	390,983	390,216	167,505	101,363	558,488	491,579
Expenditure						
Cost of raising funds	6,128	5,028	-	-	6,128	5,028
Charitable activities expenditure	321,237	369,012	233,910	17,051	555,147	386,063
Total expenditure	327,365	374,040	233,910	17,051	561,275	391,091
	-		-			-
Net income / (expenditure)	63,618	16,176	(66,406)	84,312	(2,787)	100,488
Transfers between funds	2,807		(2,807)		-	-
Net movement in funds	66,425	16,176	(69,213)	84,312	(2,787)	100,488
Fund balances brought forward	67,471	51,295	90,410	6,098	157,881	57,393
Fund balances carried forward	133,896	67,471	21,198	90,410	155,094	157,881