

SOUNDCASTLE



Trustees' Annual Report & Financial Statements

for the year ended
31st March 2025

Soundcastle Ltd
Charity Registration Number: 1194955 Company Registration Number: 08210076

Administrative Information

Trustees:	S Bell, appointed 3rd May 2024 (Chair) A Bhonagiri H Collisson S Drake-Pullin R Jarratt A Krishnan, resigned 15th Apr 2025 B Reid, appointed 3rd May 2024 C Rubin, resigned 24th Sep 2024
Charity Address:	Unit 1, 2nd Floor, Rock House 49 - 51 Cambridge Road Hastings East Sussex TN34 1DT
Bankers:	The Co-operative Bank p.l.c. P.O Box 101 1 Balloon Street Manchester M60 4EP Metro Bank p.l.c. One Southampton Row London WC1B 5HA
Accountant and Independent Examiner:	Manningtons 39 High Street, Battle, East Sussex TN33 0EE

Trustees Annual Report

The trustees present their report and the unaudited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025. Included within the trustees' report is the directors report as required by company law.

The reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Structure, Governance and Management

Soundcastle Ltd is a registered charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee with the Charity Registration Number 1194955. The governing document of Soundcastle Ltd is a memorandum and articles of association dated 16th March 2021.

The Trustees, who are also directors under company law, are appointed by ordinary resolution passed at a general meeting. One third of the members of the Trustees must retire by rotation but may stand for re-election. Trustees met every three months during the financial year in question.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £10 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees as of 31st March 2025 was 7.

Objectives and Activities for the Public Benefit

Soundcastle is an award-winning, women-led charity, based in Hastings, East Sussex and working across London and South East England. We support the mental health of people facing social inequality, alongside building sector resilience in the arts nationally.

The objects of the charity are specifically restricted to the following:

- a. To advance education, including by (but not limited to) delivering programmes relating to the arts.
- b. To provide or assist in the provision of facilities, opportunities and activities relating to the arts in the interests of social welfare for recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such opportunities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity, disability, financial hardship or social circumstances with the object of improving their conditions of life.
- c. To promote social inclusion for the public benefit by preventing people from becoming socially excluded, relieving the needs of those people who are socially excluded and assisting them to integrate into society.

For the purpose of this clause, 'socially excluded' means being excluded from society, or part of society, as a result of being a member of a socially and economically deprived community.

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning future activities and setting the grant-making policy for the period.

We run transformational, long-term music programmes which increase confidence, reduce isolation and enhance wellbeing. We work within communities, widening access and increasing opportunities for those who are underserved by traditional publicly funded arts and culture.

Our wider impact comes through community music sector development. We are a leading voice in community music in the UK and advocate for better mental health awareness; delivering Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training and creative consultancy to cultural and community organisations nationally. Our highly successful MHFA training programme attracted attendees from local arts, voluntary, care, charity, and education sectors.

Our long-term music programmes - Musical Beacons and People's Music - are embedded in communities in Sussex and East London, providing deep and sustained creative engagement and mental health support for targeted groups.

All Soundcastle programmes are delivered in collaboration with community partners, combining our creative expertise with their knowledge of each community. This ensures we identify gaps in provision and design our programmes to meet this need, in areas of low cultural engagement.

The people that Soundcastle supports are all directly impacted by reduced NHS services and the Cost of Living Crisis. The majority of our attendees experience socioeconomic disadvantage and are on the front line of rising costs. We provide targeted support for:

- Families with disabled and neurodivergent children. Many are on the autism spectrum and face challenges, including anxiety, social/emotional problems, communication and confidence.
- Families with early years children facing barriers including socioeconomic deprivation, social exclusion, mental ill health, English as an additional language, living in temporary accommodation, and not in education, employment or training.
- Young parents and early years children living in supported housing, who face complex challenges as a result of domestic abuse, substance misuse or mental ill health.
- Adults on a journey of mental health recovery, experiencing daily challenges including anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, substance abuse/addiction, self-harming, loneliness, low self-esteem and schizophrenia.
- Emerging music leaders facing barriers, including socioeconomic disadvantage, gender discrimination, LGBTQIA+ discrimination, disability discrimination, and racism.

Our Approach

Everyone is creative. This belief is at the centre of our methodology for engaging with communities. We help people to find their creative spark through transformational creative programmes.

We use creative play as a tool to support connection. We create open, inclusive spaces that promote fun, exploration and imagination. We hear laughter, we see connection, we listen as people find their voices.

We use creative exploration to celebrate and expand the imagination, confidence and creative worlds of community members. Self-belief comes from close, positive interaction, and we help people to play and sing together. Whilst each project is individual and unique, our focus is always on a collaborative approach to creativity.

Key Stats - Reach and Impact

- 3185 total session attendances
- 4132 hours of musical interaction between individual community members and facilitators

Worked directly with 744 community members:

- 377 Children and Young People (Musical Beacons)
- 235 Parents and Carers (Musical Beacons)
- 132 adults on a journey of mental health recovery (People's Music)

Delivered 402 creative sessions:

- 262 inclusive family creative play and music-making sessions (including 55 sessions within supported housing settings, 12 musical walkabouts, 98 group sessions in local community settings, 102 individual sessions, 1 community family fun day)
- 140 music for mental health recovery sessions
- Worked in partnership with 22 organisations
- Delivered community sessions in 16 locations
- 6 inclusive performances celebrating the voices of community members with a mental health diagnosis - combined live audience of 197 people
- 1 EP launch performance by the People's Music Collective in collaboration with the London Philharmonic Orchestra
- 1 short film celebrating the People's Music Collective's EP launch
- 2 LAB days in partnership with the London Philharmonic Orchestra
- 1 digital launch of new music created by community members with lived experience of mental ill health - combined digital audience of 508 people

Sector Development:

- 19 Sparking Change training and mentoring sessions delivered for 9 emerging music leaders
- 1 research partnership with Dr Ian James Axtell, SFHEA College of Education and Social Work, Faculty of Health, Education and Life Sciences at Birmingham City University
- 93 people trained in Mental Health First Aid
- 2 training projects with the Royal College of Music and Sound Connections reaching 110 practitioners
- 88 arts and community practitioners supported through skills development and training sessions in partnership with Royal College of Music, Sound Connections, Wishing Well and New Note

All names of community members have been anonymised for the purposes of this report.

Musical Beacons



Musical Beacons is our Soundcastle programme which celebrates youth voice, family bonding and community connection through the power of creative music making. It is an embedded creative health programme in the South East of England with a strong evidence base of positive impact for marginalised community groups, developed over the last 13 years. We bring together isolated families through regular creative sessions in inclusive and supported environments within their communities. We support them to build confidence and act as a bridge between isolation and local community activities. The families we work with face barriers to accessing cultural or community activity.

These barriers look like:

- socioeconomic deprivation
- living in temporary accommodation
- generational unemployment
- mental health challenges
- having English as a second language
- caring for disabled and neurodiverse children
- having a child excluded from education
- being a very young parent

A Musical Beacons session is joy in its purest form. Soundcastle facilitators engage families in messy play with sound, exploring the realms of possibility for children and their families, helping them to understand that music is for everyone. We play, make and explore, supporting children to find the confidence to express their musical voice and to create their own brand new music. We create a safe, musical space for families who feel unable to attend other existing music groups due to their child's behavioural or emotional needs.

Our facilitators have been using a combination of voice, sensory toys/materials and accessible musical instruments, working in a responsive way, adapting to different settings. This could look like:

- facilitating a non-verbal child with learning disabilities and their parents, supporting them to explore, create and have fun together
- working in a safe house with a young parent living with PTSD and supporting them to use play and song to bond with their baby
- facilitating an adoptive family online because the child's sensory needs prevent them from attending a group session and using family songwriting to support the building of new family relationships and bonds

In 2024-25 we delivered 262 Musical Beacons sessions, engaging 377 children and young people (0-11) and 235 parents and caregivers.

In all of our Musical Beacons settings, we work in a deeply embedded way, ensuring we build trust by being present in the community. Through our regular creative sessions and attendance at local community events, we are bringing often isolated people as well as a range of local organisations together through conversation, collaboration and the joy of music making.



People's Music

People's Music is a Soundcastle programme which celebrates the creativity, resilience and voice of people who live with a mental health diagnosis and are socially isolated. It is an embedded creative health programme in the South East with a strong evidence base of positive impact for marginalised community groups. We use collaborative music-making to strengthen mental health recovery, reduce social isolation and bring communities together through inspiring creative experiences.

Soundcastle facilitators embody our values of joy, care and action to build trust, playfulness and creativity. This in-turn leads to the creation of thought-provoking and inspiring original music composed by the community members themselves. Through recordings, sharing events and public performances, we tackle the stigma of mental illness and isolation and celebrate the diversity, strength and creativity of our communities.

Community members are referred by our partners, and in some cases, we work together to co-produce the courses with peer trainers who have lived experience of mental health. Our approach to creative playfulness is connected to the 5 Steps to Wellbeing (as recommended by the NHS) and this enables us to welcome anyone to join the groups from experienced musicians to those discovering music-making for the first time.

Throughout 2024-2025, we worked in partnership with a range of mental health, ageing well and dementia charities to co-produce our People's Music programme. We delivered 140 People's Music sessions, engaging 132 adults on a journey of mental health recovery.

SUSSEX PROGRAMMES 2024-25

Musical Beacons Broomgrove, Newhaven, Eastbourne & Online

- 18 Musical Beacons Broomgrove sessions
- 8 Musical Beacons In2Play sessions
- 55 sessions within supported housing settings
- 8 individual online sessions with adoptive families
- 1 community family fun day
- 12 musical walkabouts
- 241 community members were part of Musical Beacons Sussex, including 163 children

In Sussex, we work with young parents who have faced trauma due to complex challenges including homelessness, social isolation and fleeing violent, abusive relationships. They have had little access

to support and feel isolated from local community activities. Throughout 2024-25, we ran sessions within two safehouses, in partnership with Salvation Army Housing Association and East Sussex Young Parents Service, supporting early years children, young parents and project workers. These intimate weekly music sessions support the young parents to bond and play with their babies, supporting their development of parenting skills.

Our 2023 pilot of Musical Beacons in the Broomgrove housing estate has now become an embedded regular programme of activity. In partnership with Active Hastings and In2Play, we are providing regular access to arts and creativity in an area with high levels of deprivation and extremely low cultural engagement within Hastings. The programme is thriving with regular high attendance and looking ahead, we are building additional partnerships with local cultural organisations Sea Glass Arts and Spun Glass Theatre to enrich the cultural experience even further.

Finally, we are piloting a new online Musical Beacons programme – Ready to Play! – individual sessions for adoptive families. We are working with 4 different families in a recruitment partnership with Adoption SouthEast to support families whose child’s sensory needs might prevent them from accessing creative group activity. We look forward to extending this pilot into 2025-26 in the hope of securing funding to extend this new programme.

Locations

East Sussex Young Parents Service Newhaven
East Sussex Young Parents Service Eastbourne
Broomgrove Community Centre
Broomgrove Estate, Hastings
In2Play Outdoor Preschool

Partners

Active Hastings	Hastings Borough Council
Adoption South East	In2Play Outdoor Preschool
Create Music	Salvation Army Housing Association
East Hastings Family Hub	Southern Housing
East Sussex Young Parents Service	Spun Glass Theatre
	Sea Glass Arts

People’s Music Shoreham & Bexhill

- 37 Singing for Wellbeing sessions, with Sussex Recovery College, Southdown Wellbeing Centre and West Sussex MIND (Sussex)
- 24 New Rhythms (introductory music making) sessions, with Sussex Recovery College
- 8 Ukulele Crew sessions, with Sussex Recovery College
- 35 People’s Music Collective sessions
- 2 performances/ sharing events to a combined audience of 105 people
- 1 EP launch performance by the People’s Music Collective in collaboration with the London Philharmonic Orchestra

- 4 LAB sessions (creative exploration commissioned by members of the PMC around key musical areas of interest), in partnership with the London Philharmonic Orchestra
- 69 community members were part of People's Music Sussex

We continue to co-produce the People's Music Collective, our flagship band for mental health recovery that writes, records and performs their own new music. This year they launched their EP, at the Audio Active venue in Worthing, in collaboration with musicians from the London Philharmonic Orchestra. We are looking forward to further collaborations with the LPO as well as a new cultural partnership with Barefoot Opera Company in 2025-26.

In order to develop our Peoples Music programme across Sussex and reach more people, we took the decision to slightly reduce the offer in Shoreham-by-Sea so that we could extend the programme to Bexhill. Our remaining Shoreham sessions are still well attended and we have now launched a new pilot of Singing for Wellbeing in Bexhill in partnership with Southdown which we plan to extend into 2025-26.

Locations

Shoreham Centre
 West Sussex Mind
 Audio Active Performance Venue
 Southdown Wellbeing Centre

Partners

Audio Active
 Going Local Social Prescribing
 London Philharmonic Orchestra
 Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
 Sussex Recovery College
 West Sussex Mind

LONDON PROGRAMMES 2024-25

Musical Beacons Waltham Forest & Newham

- 30 Musical Beacons community sessions at the Paradox Centre
- 30 Outdoor afterschool Musical Beacons sessions in the parks
- 94 individual sessions with early years disabled children
- 371 community members were part of Musical Beacons London, including 214 children

In London, families with very young disabled and neurodivergent children told us they faced multiple barriers to accessing provision in the community, including socioeconomic factors. Many families did not access any activities outside school and were extremely isolated. To address this, we now work with families with disabled children in multiple community spaces, through individual and group family sessions in both Waltham Forest and Newham. To do this, we partner with Waltham Forest Music Education Hub, Newham SEND hub and Newham Music hub. In Waltham Forest the sessions are delivered at the Leytonstone Toy Library, a local community venture.

Locations

Paradox Centre Chingford Hall
Epicentre in Cathall Leytonstone
Leytonstone Toy Library
Altmore Children's Centre East Ham, Newham
Artesian Gardens Playground on the Cathall Estate Leytonstone
Langthorne Park, Leytonstone

Partners

Leytonstone Toy Library
London Borough of Waltham Forest
The Lloyd Park Children's Charity
Waltham Forest Music Education Hub
Newham Music
Newham SEND Hub
Peabody Housing Association

People's Music Waltham Forest

- 33 Join the Band sessions with Age UK, Carer's First and Crest Dementia Support
- 2 performances/ sharing events to a combined audience of 93 people
- 63 community members were part of People's Music London

Our 2023-24 pilot of People's Music in Chingford, London had a positive reception and is now an embedded, thriving programme with regular attendance. Word has spread, resulting in several shorter term contracts for delivery with partners Crest (Dementia Day Care) and Carer's First. The project also joined a local collaboration led by Creative Community London to create a community quilt. The band members took part in making the quilt and then used this as the inspiration for a new song called 'Our Stitched Together Lives' which was shared with community members and partners across Waltham Forest.

Locations

Age UK Waltham Forest
Parish of St Edmunds Large church hall

Partners

AGE UK
Carers First
Creative Community London
CREST Waltham Forest
Public Health Waltham Forest

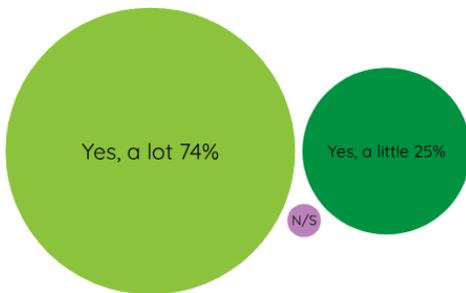
Impact

We monitor our impact using a streamlined evaluation framework based on our three core outcomes - increased confidence, reduced social isolation and enhanced wellbeing. We conduct evaluation processes involving all voices - community members, partners, facilitators, audiences and Soundcastle programme leads.

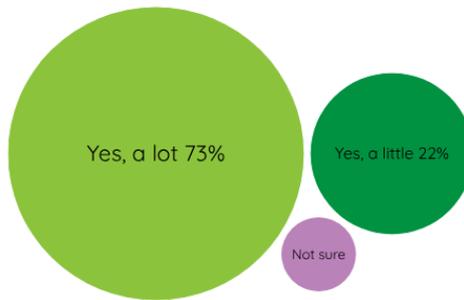
Our 2024-25 monitoring and evaluation demonstrates that we are consistently meeting all of our intended outcomes. *Data based on 145 feedback surveys received in 2024-25.*

Being part of a Soundcastle music programme has:

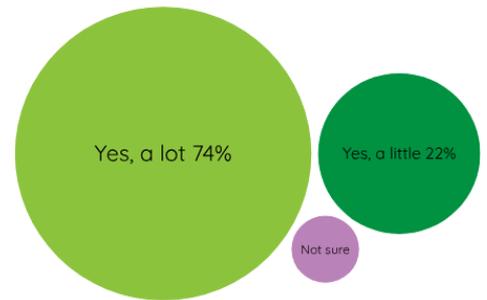
helped me improve my **confidence**:



helped me feel **more connected** to others:



improved my **wellbeing**:



Increased Confidence

99% of respondents reported feeling an increase in confidence:

"At the beginning my son was scared of noises and people and now, he learnt how to play music and feel more confident. Also for me, it gives me energy and a mental break while sharing a good moment with my son."

Musical Beacons, Paradox, Chingford

"It's great to be able to give the group your ideas and bounce them off other people. It helps confidence when something works well"

Join the Band, Waltham Forest

"Within these groups I can contribute and I am listened to. This is very validating, and in turn I can take that into my life outside of the groups. I feel more able to express myself."

People's Music Collective, Shoreham

Reduced Social Isolation

95% of respondents reported feeling an increase in connectedness to their community.

"In order to create music together, we all need to connect with each other, to be aware of what others are doing. That's when the music comes together, and in the process we come together as one. It creates the most amazing feeling of belonging, of being seen and heard."

People's Music Collective, Shoreham

"I feel seen, heard and cared for by the people in these groups. The first time in a long time that I truly feel part of a community."

New Rhythms, Shoreham-by-Sea

"...sharing and hearing others' personal experiences helping me feel I'm not alone."

Musical Beacons Paradox, Chingford

"I can now connect to the other parents without feeling embarrassed and my son has made new friends."

Musical Beacons Safehouses, Eastbourne

Enhanced Wellbeing

96% of respondents reported feeling enhanced wellbeing.

"To have the opportunity to engage with something creative each week pushes my joy button. Sharing this with others also optimises the experience."

People's Music Collective, Shoreham

"Gets me out of the house, a change of scenery plus music makes you feel good. It gives you a boost even if you're having a bad day. I come out better after being in the group for an hour and a half."

Musical Beacons Broomgrove, Hastings

"I have something in my life that makes me feel good, even when I'm not actually there but just knowing the groups are there."

Singing for Wellbeing, Shoreham

"It has encouraged me to get out, even when I didn't feel up to it"

Join the Band, Waltham Forest

"This is simply positive, feels good and uplifting... this has been about filling up the bucket of good feelings!"

Musical Beacons - Ready to Play! South East

Case Studies

Musical Beacons

Our Musical Beacons after-school sessions in London originally alternated between the Epicentre and Artesian Gardens park before moving to the Paradox Centre and Lanthorne Park. Having access to both indoor and outdoor spaces helps Soundcastle to offer inclusive music making sessions. This is Rema and Max's story. Rema has 3 sons aged 3, 6 and 7. On the cold dark November evenings, it is hard to find somewhere the children can all play after school and Musical Beacons provides a space for all three of their ages.

During her first session she tells us that her oldest son, Max, is autistic. In the hall the music facilitators give him plenty of space to move round the creative activity stations and examine the equipment. His mother joins her friends at the central table where she can chat, share food and draw and colour in as she likes. After a few weeks, Max picks up a beater and starts to play on a metallophone. Lila, a Soundcastle facilitator, picks up her flute and replies with some musical phrases. They continue a musical conversation for 10 minutes. As the weeks go on Max continues to have musical conversations using a variety of instruments. Later on, he chooses to play the keyboard with headphones on by himself for 20 minutes, exploring all the different sounds and modes. Max's brothers also move around the music and play activities, enjoying leading the Soundcastle musicians and joining in the disco musical statues games.

When the sessions move into the park in the Summer, Max and his family continue to join the sessions. He comes and plays for bursts of 5-10 minutes in between running round the park. When the team has space in our 1 to 1 sessions for families with neurodivergent children (on a separate programme in Langthorne Park), Soundcastle offer Max a space. They attend twice and this gives the team more time to interact more closely with him and understand what kind of music he enjoys. Max continues to join the park sessions and shows the team songs he likes on YouTube. Everyone sings and plays along. If the instruments he wants are not available, he indicates the boxes and then the team help him find what he wants.

Although he uses few direct words, Rema comments on how much she can see he enjoys the session and how much communication he offers our team. The facilitators are proud to have built the trust so carefully with this family.



People's Music

Sarah first joined our People's Music programme in partnership with Sussex Recovery College back in 2019. Living with a diagnosis of depression and anxiety, she was finding herself increasingly isolated and struggling to achieve everyday tasks.

She joined the programme as a keen recorder player and despite feeling nervous, she was quickly able to engage in creative activities and immerse herself in the music making process. "I joined about 5 years ago and, at that time, I had very severe anxiety and I was finding it very difficult to deal with everyday life. And I had a young daughter to bring up. But I came to these groups and found that when I focussed on music making, I'd forget my worries. And I have lots and lots of fun and I'm able to put things into perspective and can deal with the things in my life."

Sarah was very committed to attending and it was rare for her to miss a session. As the years passed and she became more confident of her role in the group, it was noticeable how she supported new members to take part, making reassuring comments, supporting them to learn new instrumental skills and always offering a positive word of encouragement. It felt like a very natural progression when Sarah found the courage to apply for the employed position of being a peer trainer for Sussex Recovery College and asked the Soundcastle team for a reference. With her application being successful, she now co-produces the New Rhythms course in Shoreham-by-Sea with Soundcastle facilitators. "We have so much fun together so it's given me the confidence to be a Peer Trainer and to stand up in front of a group of students."

Sarah recently made a speech to an audience of more than 50 people at our Winter Warmer event, talking about her experience, something she admitted she wouldn't have been able to do several years ago. This new found confidence has rippled out to other areas of her life and she now talks and runs events at her local church too.



I joined about 5 years ago and, at that time, I had very severe anxiety and I was finding it very difficult to deal with everyday life. And I had a young daughter to bring up.

But I came to these groups and found that when focussed on music making, I'd forget my worries.

And I have lots and lots of fun and I'm able to put things into perspective and can deal with the things in my life.

It's given me the confidence to be a Peer Trainer and to stand up in front of a group of students, and now I'm also able to stand up and speak to you now.

(Audience applause and loud cheers to this)

Sector Development

Consultancy and Training

Throughout 2024-25 Soundcastle has continued to deliver training and consultancy in support of the community arts sector. By delivering consultancy we continue to expand our sector's understanding of high quality co-production in community practice.

We have continued our training relationship with the Royal College of Music providing a bi yearly creative education music class for all second year undergraduate students which introduces the principles of inclusive creative practice.

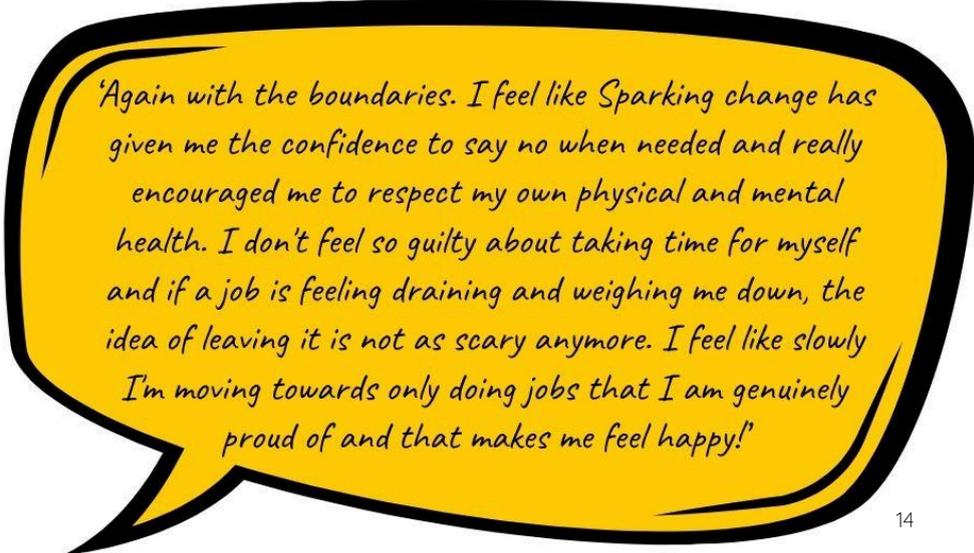
We have continued to develop our Mental Health First Aid training offer on a mission to improve wellbeing, resilience and understanding of mental health across the sector. We have delivered MHFA training for organisations including Youth Music, Music Mark and Kent Music as well as 4 subsidised open sessions for freelancers. This has resulted in 93 new Mental Health First Aiders in the arts sector. Further skills development and training sessions in partnership with Royal College of Music, Sound Connections, Newham Music, Wishing Well and New Note have supported 88 arts and community practitioners to develop their skills.

Sparking Change

Between September 24 - March 25 we delivered a 6 month Sparking Change programme for emerging music leaders facing barriers in the sector. This involved:

- Individual mentoring with two Soundcastle team members
- Creative skills sessions in music facilitation
- Co working sessions with peers and support from the Soundcastle team
- Two part training series about the Power of Partnerships
- A qualification in Mental Health Awareness
- An Introduction to Fundraising session
- Signposting to further opportunities for paid work
- Traineeship observation and volunteering opportunities within Soundcastle

Over 75% of Sparking Change attendees reported increased confidence in their professional lives, improved connections with people across the community arts sector and feelings of enhanced wellbeing by the end of the programme.



'Again with the boundaries. I feel like Sparking change has given me the confidence to say no when needed and really encouraged me to respect my own physical and mental health. I don't feel so guilty about taking time for myself and if a job is feeling draining and weighing me down, the idea of leaving it is not as scary anymore. I feel like slowly I'm moving towards only doing jobs that I am genuinely proud of and that makes me feel happy!'

'Sparking Change helped me face my fears and work through them, unlocking my creativity! I feel more confident and motivated to make and share music with the world!'

'Sparking Change is about exploring the ways we can share music with others, giving us the knowledge, skills and confidence to do so effectively. I now feel I can effectively use music as a tool for communication, engagement, growth and healing and share that with others.'

Research

This year, we partnered with Birmingham City University (BCU) as part of our Youth Music fund of Musical Beacons. In Autumn 2024, the London and Sussex facilitation teams undertook training to embark on an auto-ethnographic research project which asked 'What is creative agency in a Musical Beacons session?' We focused on our two targeted programmes; the Safehouses sessions in Sussex and the SEN/D sessions in London.

The teams were mentored by BCU academic, Dr Ian Axtell throughout the process. They were given access to academic research papers, alongside facilitated reflection sessions, guidance on designing effective research questions and data collection. Four facilitators gathered data on their delivery and decision making throughout the autumn term. We used the concept of 'significant moments' to track their decision making within each session. This then led to further reflective data gathered from the facilitators which asked them to analyse their pedagogical approach to creative agency.

Participatory action research into creative agency in community music education.

Gail MacLeod



Creative Director and London Lead

Dr Ian James Axtell, BCU



Research mentor

S | O | U | N | D | C | A | S | T | L | E



The findings show the depth of awareness facilitators hold to navigate these complex spaces, alongside the breadth of activity that might be considered effective and high quality delivery. We have gained two further concepts (significant moments and signature pedagogies) to bring to our training as well as a strong reflective framework underpinned by academic research.

In July 2025 we will present our findings at the CSpace Conference: The transformative power of educational research at BCU and the Music and Parental Wellbeing Symposium at the Royal College of Music.

Internal Development

Advisory Panel

The Soundcastle Advisory Panel has met twice during 2024-25. The group is made up of representatives from across Soundcastle's programmes and community including partners, trustees, community members, team members and critical friends. The main themes of conversations were:

- A review of the proposal Soundcastle 2025-30 business plan
- Creating a visual map of the charity
- Making links with corporate supporters
- How to best tell the Soundcastle story
- How the AP can support with income generation

The panel continues to grow and diversify and aims to meet three times in 2025-26. It forms a critical part of Soundcastle's decision making process and a hugely valuable resource in steering our thinking and development.

Training

Over 2024-25, the whole Soundcastle staff met for 2 cross regional development days exploring safeguarding, our new Breathe HR system, an introduction to Makaton and an introduction to the Soundcastle Business Plan.

The facilitators took part in further internal training sessions on co-design and co-creation with early years children, reflective practice, whole group singing and improvisation leadership skills.

We continue to build upon our training partnership with New Note and Wishing Well. This allows our facilitators to practise with larger groups and explore ideas within a wider pool. All members of staff working in community settings and those managing others have compulsory termly supervisions with the Orange Collective. This is a proactive action to support our team as they process the complex challenges we face when delivering our programmes and to support mental health in a constructive way.

Governance

Sarah Drake-Pullin stepped down as Chair of the Board of Trustees in May 2025, having served since December 2020. We extend our gratitude to Sarah for her support of Soundcastle through her

roles as Co-Chair and subsequently Chair of the Board. We are grateful that Sarah will continue to support Soundcastle’s income generation and strategic direction through her role as a Trustee.

The Board has undergone additional changes during the year. We record our sincere thanks to Caitlin McMillan and Akhila Krishnan, who have resigned as Trustees after serving since the charity’s inception. Caitlin and Akhila’s expertise made a significant contribution to our work, and we are grateful for the insight and commitment they brought to the Board.

We welcomed two new Trustees in May 2024:

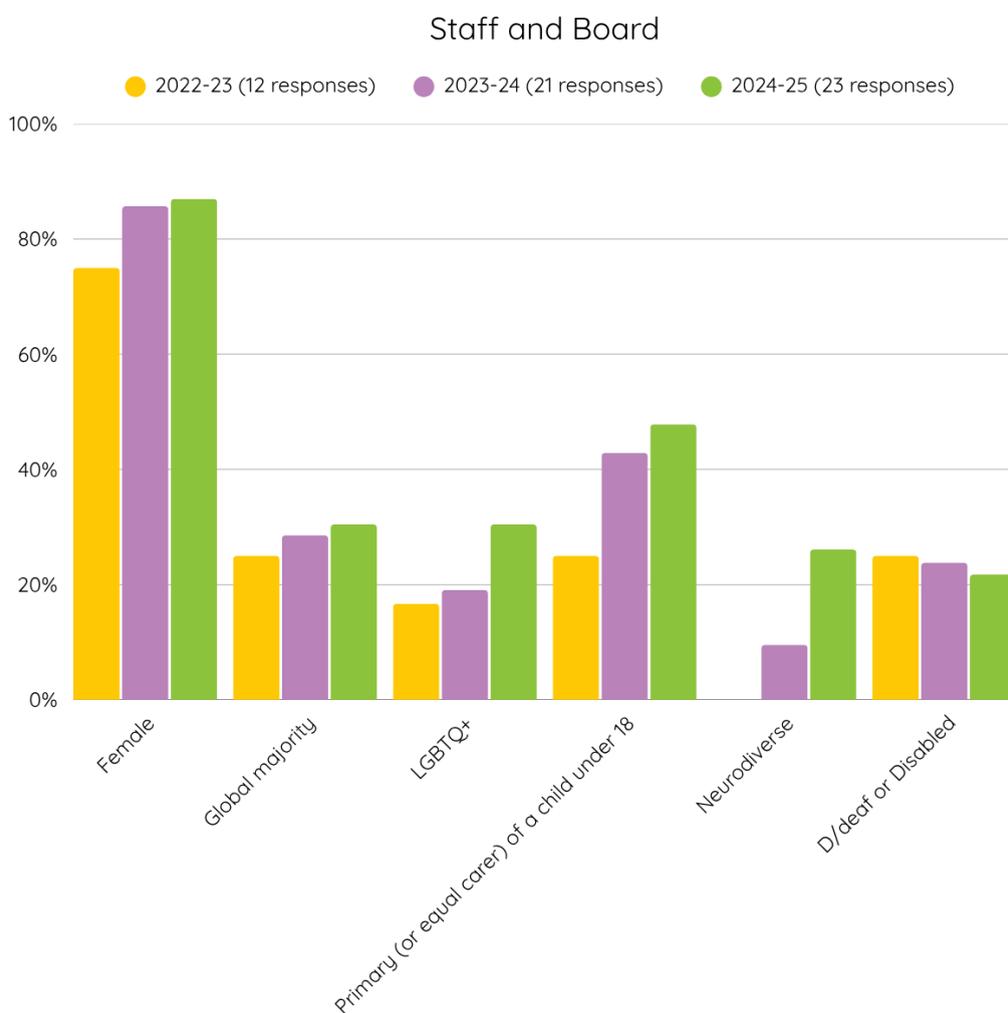
- Sophie Bell – whose extensive legal expertise will strengthen our governance and compliance
- Blair Reid – who brings substantial experience in financial management to support our financial oversight and strategic planning

Their skills and fresh perspectives will be invaluable as we continue to advance Soundcastle’s mission in the years ahead.

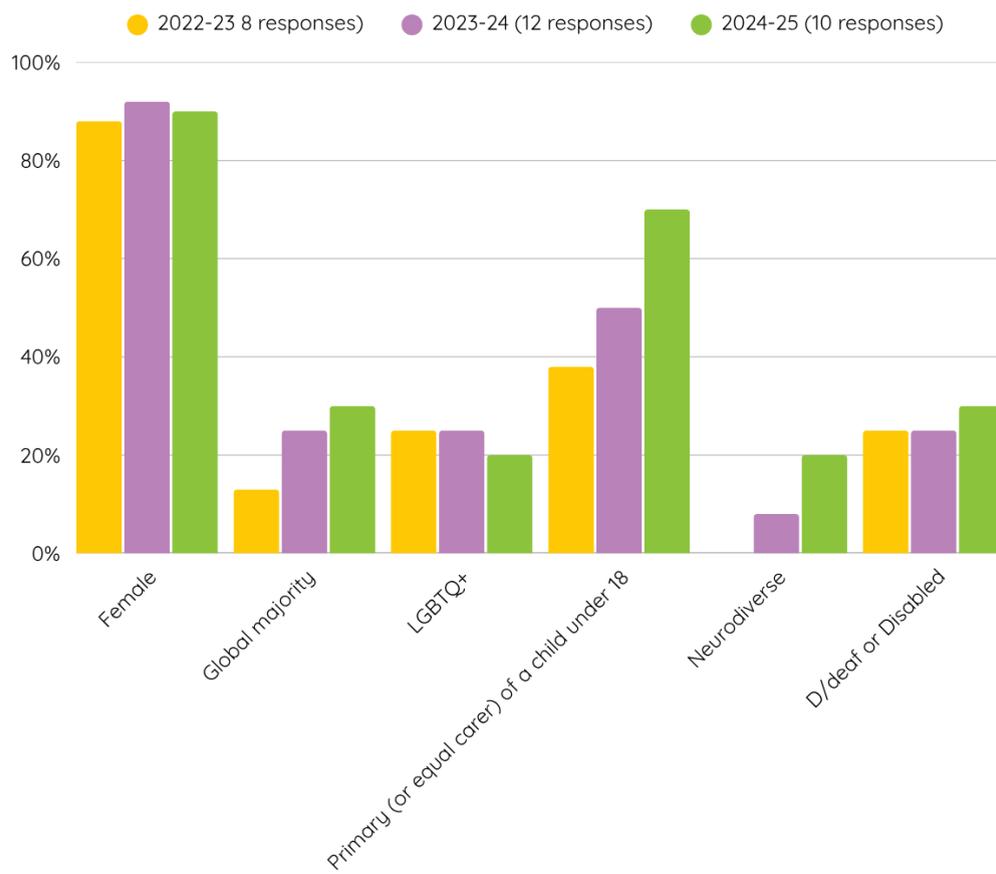
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

We value high levels of representation across the charity. We had 23 responses to our 2024-25 EDI monitoring survey and have compared them below to the previous 2 years.

In 2024-25 87% of our staff team and board identify as female, 48% identify as primary or equal carer of a child or children under 18, 30% identify as from global majority backgrounds, 22% identify as D/deaf or disabled, 30% identify as LGBTQ+, 26% identify as neurodivergent. 70% of our staff team and board have lived experience of mental health challenges.



Leadership and Board



We have continued to develop our approach to equity, diversity and inclusion and have made some significant developments in terms of our staffing and practice. These include:

- Targeted reach out to partners regarding recruitment for our Advisory Panel and meeting access needs as required
- Targeted recruitment for our Sparking Change programme, bringing together a diverse cohort of young people who have faced barriers to accessing training and development opportunities. Following this, the recruitment of two of these Sparking Change attendees as Soundcastle trainees, providing a 6-month mentoring and delivery pathway
- The pilot of a new series of bespoke, individual sessions for families with adopted children in the South East
- Continuing engagement of the Orange Collective as an external supervision partner that uses inclusive supervision methods such as visual art processes to support the wellbeing of our diverse staff team. These are confidential sessions in which the supervisors gather themes and feed them back to a leadership team member, who then embeds change organisationally to meet staff needs
- Ongoing conversations with music hubs around inclusive progression routes for disabled children aged 0-6
- Renewal of our Disability Confident Employer status and review of our self-assessment
- Working towards Disability Confident Leader status

Disability, Mental Health and Wellbeing

Disability

Soundcastle is committed to creating an inclusive and supportive working environment for all employees, in line with our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. As a registered Disability Confident employer, we have taken proactive steps to ensure that staff with physical or mental health conditions are fully supported to thrive in their roles.

We have developed a Disability Passport and Reasonable Adjustments Policy, providing a clear process for identifying, agreeing and recording adjustments that support staff to carry out their roles effectively. Adjustments made to date have included flexible working arrangements, assistive technology, screen filters, reduced hours during periods of ill health, and tailored support for those with sensory needs or neurodivergence.

We follow inclusive recruitment practices, which include the use of accessible application formats, clear job descriptions, and adjustments offered at every stage of the process. We also signpost applicants to Access to Work and provide additional support as required.

We offer inclusive traineeships and have successfully supported trainees with lived experience of disability into meaningful community music roles through our Sparking Change programme.

In 2024–25, we carried out an EDI survey with responses from staff, trainees and trustees. We received 23 responses. The relevant questions and outcomes were:

Do you identify as disabled?

17.4% answered yes, 1 preferred not to say

Are you D/deaf?

4.3% answered yes, 1 preferred not to say

Do you identify as neurodivergent or autistic?

26% answered yes, 2 answered “not known”, 1 declined to answer

Have you experienced mental health challenges?

70% answered yes, 1 response was “not known”, 2 preferred not to say

For 2025–26, we have updated our monitoring to directly align with the Voluntary Reporting Framework recommended question: “Do you consider yourself to have a disability or long-term health condition (mental health and/or physical health)?”

We recognise that self-identification may be influenced by a range of personal, cultural or sector-related factors, and we are working to build a workplace culture in which people feel safe, supported, and empowered to request the adjustments they need to thrive.

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Mental health and wellbeing is at the core of Soundcastle’s culture and is outlined in our Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy. As a creative health organisation working with community members facing complex challenges, we believe it is essential to invest in the wellbeing of our staff team.

Wellbeing Agenda - in the past 12 months we have built upon the foundations of our original internal wellbeing consultation (2023-24) and are now pursuing an East Sussex Wellbeing at Work Bronze Award. As part of this we submit evidence of how we support our team. This includes:

- Leadership, Management & Workplace Culture through sharing the results of our 2025 staff wellbeing survey, with signposting and suggestions on how to improve wellbeing subjects raised in the survey.
- Mental & Financial Health Wellbeing with signposting for the team of how to find resources if they need support.
- Musculoskeletal / Health & Safety; Information shared on prevention and pain management with a focus on desk work and working on computers in the office and home working.

We plan to complete the Bronze Award by September 2025, with the aim of progressing to the Silver Award by March 2026.

We continue to adhere to the activities of our original consultation including:

- Adhering to a Soundcastle Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Compulsory termly supervision for all staff who manage others and work directly in community contexts. This is a vital space in which people process the challenges that they experience, both working with vulnerable communities and in creating the healthiest relationships with peers
- Formalised line management review structures based on wellbeing. As a peer led organisation we have always placed equal value on all voices in decision making however, by formalising this model we are able to better meet the needs of our team and centre their voices
- Wellness Action Plans that each team member completes confidentially and uses to influence their line management reviews and team meetings. This is helping us to create a highly tailored environment that meets the personal needs of each member of staff
- Formed a training partnership with three other brilliant community music organisations so our teams can train together and share learning. This shared approach enables us to provide more training and commission sessions that the teams feel would be most valuable for their work
- All staff undertake Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training at Level 2, becoming accredited Mental Health First Aiders. This supports a shared understanding of mental health, early intervention, and how to create psychologically safe working environments

In our 2024 - 25 EDI survey, 70% of respondents reported lived experience of mental health challenges. This insight informs our ongoing staff wellbeing strategy and reinforces the importance of embedding mental health awareness across all areas of our work.

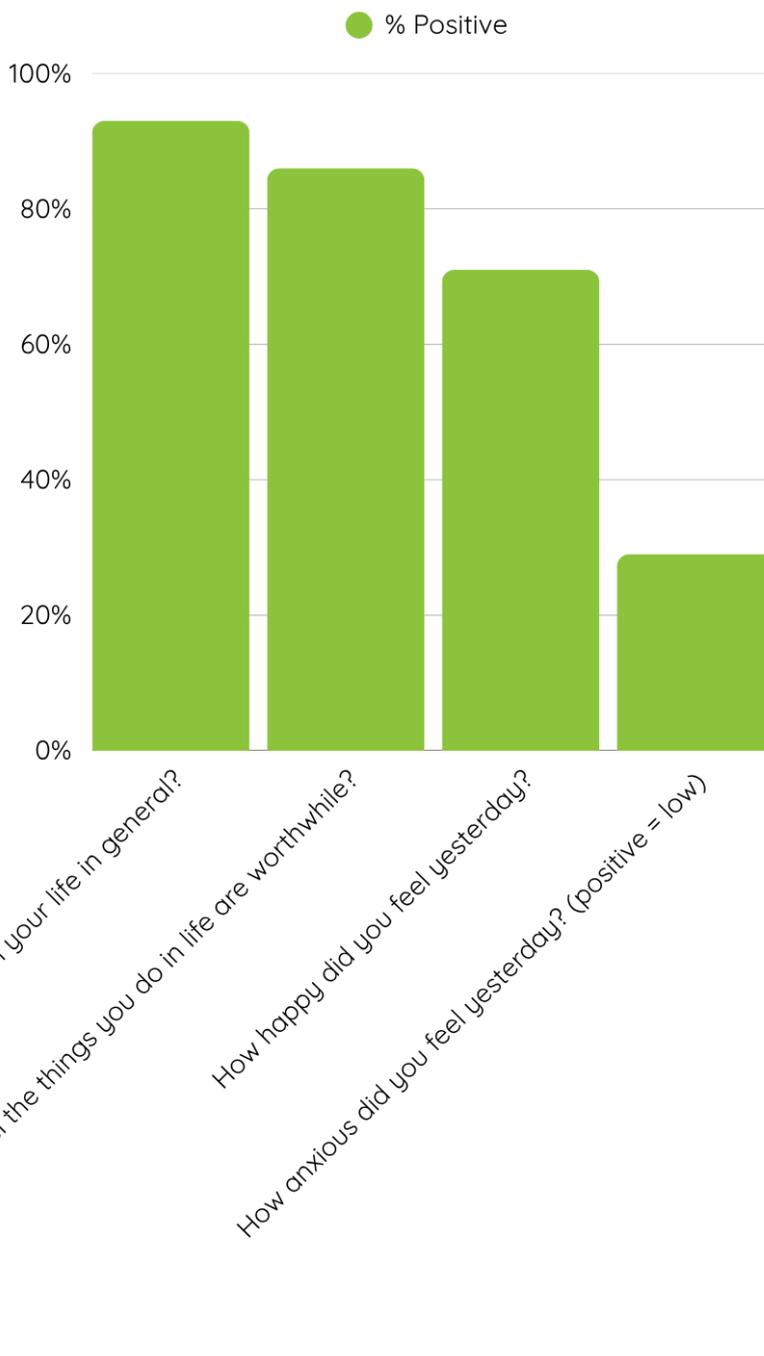
January 2025 Wellbeing at Work survey results:

Engagement: 100% staff response rate

Methodology: Employees were asked to rate their responses on a 0-10 scale. The top four most positive scores have been combined to produce the following percentage of positive responses:

The survey also asked employees to rank their response to a series of statements. The outcomes were:

- 100% consider their health in general to be good (79%) or very good (21%)
- 86% are very satisfied or quite satisfied with their job
- 93% are very satisfied or quite satisfied with the social environment at work
- 86% are very satisfied or quite satisfied with the physical environment at work
- 71% reported finding their job mildly or not at all stressful
- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that there is good cooperation between colleagues
- 100% feel able to speak to their manager about stress, anxiety, depression or any other mental health concern
- 100% strongly agreed that Soundcastle supports their health and wellbeing



Environmental Responsibility

In November 2024, the Soundcastle Co-founders attended the Music Mark conference in Nottingham, on the theme of Sustainability. They participated in multiple workshops and sessions, exploring themes around best practice in music education and community arts and also supported sector peers as Mental Health First Aiders, holding sensitive conversations around climate issues.

Following this, in March 2025 Soundcastle's Design & Digital Coordinator attended Music Mark's Carbon Literacy Training and has been working with the team to embed the most sustainable and

environmentally sound practices online. He is also currently writing a policy to support this learning which will be shared with the Soundcastle board in September 2025.

In April 2025 Soundcastle officially declared as part of the 'Culture Declares Emergency' movement. [You can read our declaration here.](#)

2024-25 is the first year that Soundcastle have tracked staff travel and purchasing in line with our environmental goals and so are now best placed to analyse this data to identify our current position and set targets for 2025-26. Examples of current best practice include buying/ printing locally, purchasing secondhand technology and resources, car pooling between programmes.

Soundcastle's board also expanded roles and now has Co-leads who represent Environmental Responsibility at a governance level.

Digital Reach

Whilst our programmes on the ground are deeply rooted in live interaction and hyperlocal communities, we are also proud of our digital reach, which is where we share our message around the importance of music making for mental health and community wellbeing. The ripple effect is felt nationally and internationally through our online platforms, where content is a combination of programme highlights, provocations, community engagement, team celebrations and national campaign engagement.

YouTube views: 2,344

Facebook Reach 17,000

Instagram Reach 9,300 (+4,600)

Total Facebook followers: 1,039 (+50)

Total Instagram followers : 982 (+43)

Total LinkedIn followers: 485 (+109)

Total Youtube subscribers: 480 (+3)

SoundCloud listens: 100

Future Plans

After many brilliant years of dedication and embodied practice, our London Creative Director, Co-Founder and Programme Lead, Gail Macleod, has chosen to embark on new adventures beyond Soundcastle. We warmly acknowledge her outstanding contribution to the charity and look forward with excitement to following her future endeavours.

In response to the ongoing financial pressures affecting both the arts and charitable sectors, we have undertaken a strategic reassessment of our operations. After careful consideration, in light of Gail's departure and financial challenges, we have made the difficult decision to close our London-based programmes from December 2025. This necessary step will enable us to streamline operations and focus on strengthening our impact within Sussex, where we will consolidate our resources and expertise.

The London programmes will transition into a legacy phase during 2025-26. We will proactively explore opportunities to ensure lasting impact, working closely with peer organisations to determine potential future pathways for each programme. Our commitment is to leave a robust legacy of improved mental health, stronger community connections, and enhanced local capacity in the arts sector.

This period of change comes amid rising operational costs and an increasingly competitive and challenging fundraising environment. By consolidating our activities into Sussex, we aim to maximise efficiency, resilience, and local community impact. This shift underscores our unwavering commitment to delivering meaningful, high-quality community music programmes in a focused, effective manner.

Looking ahead, we have developed an ambitious and proactive Business Plan for 2025-2030. Central to this new strategic direction is the diversification of income streams. We are committed to building our earned income through increased Mental Health First Aid training partnerships, bespoke commissions, and building stronger relationships with individual donors and corporate partners. This diversified approach will provide resilience, enabling us to sustainably fund our community initiatives, continue to innovate creatively, and effectively respond to the evolving needs of our communities.

Through the development of new strands of commissioned work, we will focus on creating replicable, tailored models of our Musical Beacons programme, building upon our extensive expertise in delivering specialised support to early years children and young parents/carers in safehouses, adoptive families through individual sessions, and children with SEND and their families.

We extend heartfelt gratitude to our London-based partners, communities, and supporters who have enriched our work over many years. As we enter this next chapter with optimism and determination, we remain dedicated to creating vibrant, inclusive musical experiences that foster community wellbeing and cohesion across Sussex.

Financial Review

The financial statements attached detail the financial position of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2025.

Incoming resources for the year totalled £326,216 of which £266,184 were for restricted purposes. Outgoing resources for the year were £320,080 of which £263,801 were attributable to restricted funds. Restricted funds carried forward at the year end totalled £60,381 and unrestricted funds totalled £131,552. £30,000 grant funding from Postcode Community Trust has been designated by the Trustees to support programme and core operating costs during the 2025-26 financial year and will not be held for reserves.

Our earned income was £18,066 representing approximately 5.5% of our total income through sales, commissions, coaching, consultancy and Mental Health First Aid training.

We are grateful for the ongoing support we have received from a wide variety of funders including The National Foundation for Youth Music, Arts Council England, Garfield Weston Foundation, The National Lottery Community Fund, London Community Foundation, Sussex Community Foundation, Arts Award Access Fund, The Rayne Foundation, Children in Need, The Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust, City Bridge Foundation, Waltham Forest Music Education Hub, Heads On VCSE Collaborative,

The Shared Prosperity Fund through Hastings Borough Council, Postcode Community Trust, The Chalk Cliff Trust, The Foyle Foundation, Hastings & St Leonards Foreshore Charitable Trust, The Isabel Blackman Foundation & The Magdalen & Lasher Charity.

We would like to extend our thanks to all our funders and individual donors for their generous support of the charity's work in the 2024-25 financial year.

Reserves Policy

The trustees have considered the Soundcastle's need for reserves with reference to the level of risk it faces. They have concluded that it is important for the charity to always hold in financial reserves, as a minimum, the funds that would be required to ensure an ordered and proper closure of Soundcastle Ltd.

This level of reserves will fund:

- Any redundancy payments due to employees
- Accountancy and other professional costs
- Costs relating to the termination of contracts including office rental and equipment hire
- A contingency sum held for outstanding liabilities

This initial reserves position assumes that no immediate withdrawal of funding will occur. To mitigate the risks arising in the event of an immediate loss of funds, the trustees have established a policy whereby the charity holds unrestricted reserves at a level equivalent to three to six months' running costs. The trustees consider that this level of reserves should be maintained on an ongoing basis in order to ensure the future financial resilience of the charity.

As per the enclosed accounts, expenditure on running costs in 2024-25 was £320,080 and therefore the target level of reserves is between £80,020 and £160,040 in general funds.

On 31st March 2025 unrestricted reserves totalled £101,552, therefore the trustees are satisfied that the charity is maintaining sufficient reserves in line with the reserves policy.

Trustees' Responsibilities in Relation to the Financial Statements

The trustees (who are also directors of Soundcastle Ltd for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company 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 and statements of recommended practice 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 the charity will continue in operation

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 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 for 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 charitable company'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 provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved by the trustees on 18th July 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



Sophie Bell
CHAIR of the BOARD of TRUSTEES

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Soundcastle Ltd for the year ended 31 March 2025

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 March 2025 which are set out on pages 27 to 41.

As the charity trustees of the 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 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 company's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('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.

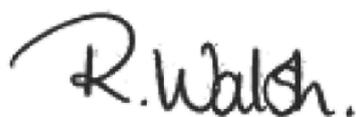
Independent examiner's statement

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the 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.

Manningtons Chartered Accountants
39 High Street
Battle
East Sussex
TN33 0EE



Rowena T K Walsh (FCCA)

Date: 12th August 2025

Statement of Financial Activities for the Financial Year Ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds 31 March 2025	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds to 31 March 2024
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:							
Donations and legacies	2	2,121	-	2,121	2,501	-	2,501
Charitable activities	2	56,816	266,184	323,000	87,351	259,633	346,983
Interest Received	2	1,096	-	1,096	560	-	560
Total		60,033	266,184	326,216	90,412	259,633	350,044
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds		60		60	310	-	310
Charitable activities	3	56,218	263,801	320,019	30,635	251,254	281,889
Total		56,279	263,801	320,080	30,945	251,254	282,199
Net income/(expenditure) before transfers		3,754	2,383	6,137	59,467	8,379	67,845
Transfer between funds		-	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		3,754	2,383	6,137	59,467	8,379	67,845
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		127,798	57,998	185,796	68,330	49,619	117,949
Total funds carried forward		131,552	60,381	191,934	127,798	57,998	185,796
The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.							
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.							

Balance Sheet as of 31st March 2025

	Notes	31 March 2025		31 March 2024
		£		£
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	10	319		410
Total fixed assets		319		410
Current assets				
Debtors	7	9,783		22,924
Cash at bank and in hand	9	186,740		169,325
Total current assets		196,523		192,249
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	8	4,909		6,863
Net current assets/(liabilities)		191,615		185,386
Total assets less current liabilities		191,933		185,796
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year	10			
Total net assets / (liabilities)		191,933		185,796
Funds of the Charity				
Restricted funds	11	60,381		57,998
Unrestricted funds	11	131,552		127,798
Total funds		191,933		185,796
For the year in question, the company was entitled to exemption from an audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.				
Directors' responsibilities:				
The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476,				
The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.				
These accounts are prepared in accordance with the special provisions of part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies and constitute the annual accounts required by the Companies Act 2006 and are for circulation to the members of the company.				
The notes on pages 29 to 41 form an integral part of the financial statements.				
Approved by the trustees on 18th July 2025 and signed on their behalf by:				
				
Sophie Bell				

Note 1: Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities in preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), second edition - October 2019 (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2016.

The charity has applied the exemption available to small charities in the Charities SORP (FRS 102) and does not include a Statement of Cash Flows in these Financial Statements.

Soundcastle Ltd 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 notes.

b) Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amount of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

c) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be reliably measured.

Income for government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions have been met, it is probable that the income will be received the account can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Donations are recognised when the charity receives the funds.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known and the receipt is expected. If the amount is not known the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

d) Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose.

Restricted funds are funds which the donor has specified are solely to be used for particular activities.

e) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

f) Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be recognised reliably.

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

All expenditure is shown inclusive of VAT.

g) Allocation of support costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, personnel, payroll and governance costs. Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

h) Tangible Fixed Assets

Individual assets costing £550 or more are capitalised at cost and are depreciated evenly over their estimated useful economic lives, as follows:

Plant and machinery	15% reducing balance
Computer equipment	25% reducing balance

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

The gain or less arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the assets, and is recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

i) Impairment of fixed assets

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

j) Debtors

Debtors (including trade debtors and loans receivable) are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the charity. Subsequently, they are measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be received.

k) 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 provision re normally recognised at their settle met amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

l) Corporation Tax

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

m) Key estimates and accounting judgements

In applying the charity's accounting policies, the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions in determining the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities. The Trustees' judgements, estimates and assumptions are based on the best and most reliable evidence available at the time when the decisions are made, and are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be applicable. Due to the inherent subjectivity involved in making such judgements, estimates and assumptions, the actual results and outcomes may differ.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to the accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised, if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of revision and future periods, if the revision affects both current and future periods.

Note 2: Analysis of income

	2025				2024	
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds		Total funds	
	£	£	£			
Donations and legacies:						
Donations and gifts	2,121	-	2,121		2,501	
Total	2,121	-	2,121		2,501	
Interest Received						
Bank Interest Received	1,096		1,096		560	
					-	
Total	1,096	-	1,096		560	
Charitable activities:						
Grants	38,750	266,184	304,934		309,633	
Earned Income	18,066	-	18,066		37,351	
Total	56,816	266,184	323,000		346,983	
Total income	60,033	266,184	326,216		350,044	
During the period Soundcastle received the following amounts from Government grants:						
		£				
Arts Council England		61,385				
Hastings Borough Council		23,750				
Hastings Borough Council Foreshore						
Charitable Trust		5,400				
		85,135				
During the period Soundcastle received the following amounts as donations:						
		£				
		-				

Note 3: Analysis of expenditure

	2025		2024
	£		£
Direct project costs	29,092		35,174
Depreciation	91		119
Salaries and wages	267,324		225,562
Travel	165		1,632
Staff training	1,978		-
Insurance	949		927
Rent	10,343		9,911
Other expenses	3,166		2,047
	313,108		275,371
Share of support costs (see note 4)	3,350		3,828
Share of governance costs (see note 5)	3,622		2,998
	320,080		282,197
Analysis by fund			
Unrestricted funds	56,279		30,945
Restricted funds	263,801		251,254
	320,080		282,199

Note 4: Governance and Other Support Costs

The total support costs and overheads attributable to charitable activity is apportioned as shown below:

		2025	2024
	Support Costs	Total	Total
	£	£	£
Website	-	-	140
Subscriptions	3,064	3,064	2,838
Advertising and Marketing	286	286	112
Postage and stationery	-	-	738
	3,350	3,350	3,828

	31 March 2025		31 March 2024
	£		
Governance Costs			
Independent Examination	1,200		1,200
Accountancy Fees	1,800		1,200
Payroll Fees	622		598
	3,622		2,998

Note 5: Details of certain items of expenditure

	17 July 1905		2024
	£		£
Independent examiner's fees	1,200		1,200
Other accountancy fees	2,422		1,798
Total	3,622		2,998

Note 6: Employees

	2025	2024
	£	£
Salaries and wages	247,380	216,874
Social security costs	11,249	8,141
Pension costs (defined contribution scheme)	8,695	7,619
Other	-	0
Total staff costs	267,325	232,633

No employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) for the reporting period of more than £60,000

8.2 Average head count in the year

	2025	2024
	16	15
Total	16	15

8.3 Key Management Personnel

The remuneration of the key management personnel is:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Salaries and wages	104,545	101,008
Social security costs	9,406	8,709
Pension costs (defined contribution scheme)	4,182	4,041
Total staff costs	118,133	113,758

No employee received remuneration over £60,000.

Note 7: Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year		
	31 March 2025	31 March 2024
	£	£
Accrued income	600	16,730
Accrued Interest	-	560
Salaries Payable		-
Gift Aid Debtor	178	226
Accounts Receivable	9,005	5,408
Total	9,783	22,924

Note 8: Creditors & Accruals

Analysis of creditors: falling due within one year		
	31 March 2025	31 March 2024
	£	£
Accruals and deferred income	-	1,194
Accounts Payable	1,750	2,559
PAYE Payable	3,158	1,599
Earnings Orders Payable	-	154
Other creditors	-	1,356
Total	4,909	6,863

Deferred income comprises of income received by the Trust in 2024 for activities taking place in 2025.

	£	
Balance at 31 March 2024	-	
Amounts released to income earned from charitable activities	-	
Amount deferred in period	-	
Balance at 31 March 2025	-	

Note 9: Cash at bank and in hand

	31 March 2025		31 March 2024
	£		£
The Co-operative Bank Current Account	23,589		11,734
PayPal	141		2,591
Metrobank Current Account	68,001		65,001
The Co-operative Bank Savings Account	91,656		90,000
Wise	3,354		-
Total	186,740		169,325

Note 10: Tangible Fixed Assets

	Plant and machinery	Computer Equipment	Total
	£	£	£
Cost			
At 1 April 2024	868	3,922	4,790
Additions	-	-	-
At 31 March 2025	868	3,922	4,790
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2024	755	3,624	4,380
Charge for the year	17	74	91
At 31 March 2025	772	3,698	4,471
Net book value at 1 April 2024	113	298	410
Net book value at 31 March 2025	96	224	319

Note 11: Charity funds

	Balance at 1 April 2024	Income	Expenditure	Transfer between funds	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£	£	£		£
<i>Restricted Funds</i>					
National Foundation for Youth Music	8,405	70,800	(69,894)	-	9,311
Arts Council England	-	61,385	(32,748)	-	28,637
The National Lottery Community Fund	20,000	-	(19,266)	-	734
London Community Foundation	5,000	-	(5,000)	-	-
Sussex Community Foundation	-	7,789	(5,193)	-	2,596
Arts Award Access Fund	740	-	(10)	-	730
The Rayne Foundation	5,267	-	(5,267)	-	-
Children in Need	104	10,000	(10,104)	-	-
The Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust	-	4,000	(3,000)	-	1,000
City Bridge Foundation	5,317	42,460	(42,404)	-	5,373
Heads On	10,000	-	(10,000)	-	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	15,000	(10,000)	-	5,000.00
The Foyle Foundation	-	20,000	(20,000)	-	-
The Isabel Blackman Foundation	-	3,000	-	-	3,000.00
The Magdalen and Lasher Charity	-	2,000	-	-	2,000.00
Hastings Borough Council/Shared Prosperity Fund	3,165	23,750	(26,915)	-	-
Foreshore Charitable Trust	-	6,000	(4,000)	-	2,000
	57,998	266,184	(263,801)	-	60,381
<i>Unrestricted Funds</i>					
Postcode Community Trust	30,000	30,000	(30,000)	-	30,000
The Chalk Cliff Trust	-	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
Waltham Forest Music Education Hub	-	2,000	(2,000)	-	-
General Funds	97,798	23,033	(19,279)	-	101,552
	127,798	60,033	(56,279)	-	131,552
Total Funds	185,796	326,217	(320,080)	-	191,933

2024 Comparatives:	Balance at 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfer between funds	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£	£	£		£
<i>Restricted Funds</i>					
National Foundation for Youth Music	2,164	87,600	(81,359)	-	8,405
Arts Council England	-	47,910	(47,910)	-	-
The National Lottery Community Fund	7,000	20,000	(7,000)	-	20,000
London Community Foundation	6,455	15,000	(16,455)	-	5,000
Sussex Community Foundation	7,000	2,000	(9,000)		-
Arts Award Access Fund	-	740	0	-	740
The Rayne Foundation	4,000	12,000	(10,733)	-	5,267
Postcode Society Trust	7,000	-	(7,000)	-	-
Children In Need	10,000	-	(9,896)	-	104
The Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust	3,000	-	(3,000)		-
The Souter Charitable Trust	3,000	-	(3,000)		-
City Bridge Foundation	-	30,653	(25,336)		5,317
Heads On	-	20,000	(10,000)		10,000
The Sir Bernard and Lady Schreier Foundation	-	2,000	(2,000)		-
Hastings Borough Council/Shared Prosperity Fund	-	18,750	(15,585)		3,165
London Borough of Waltham Forest - Adult Learning Fund	-	2,980	(2,980)		-
	49,619	259,633	(251,254)	-	57,998
<i>Unrestricted Funds</i>					
Postcode Community Trust	-	50,000	(20,000)	-	30,000
The Chalk Cliff Trust	5,000	-	(5,000)	-	-
General Funds	63,330	40,412	(5,944)	-	97,798
	68,330	90,412	(30,944)	-	127,798
Total Funds	117,949	350,045	(282,198)	-	185,796
<i>Restricted Funds:</i>					
Funder	Description of Fund				
National Foundation for Youth Music	Multi year grant funding received in 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years in support of the cross-regional Musical Beacons and Sparking Change programmes, and development of the Soundcastle Health and Wellbeing Agenda.				

Arts Council England	Grant funding received in 2023/24 and 2024/25 to support People's Music and Musical Beacons Broomgrove programme delivery.
The National Lottery Community Fund	Grant funding received in 2023/24 to support People's Music Sussex programme delivery.
London Community Foundation	Multi year grant received in 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years for Musical Beacons London and People's Music London programme delivery.
Sussex Community Foundation	Grant funding received in 2023/24 and 2024/25 for the People's Music Sussex programme, and the continuation of essential services.
Arts Award Access Fund	Grant funding received in 2023/24 financial years for delivery of Arts Award qualifications through Musical Beacons Sussex.
The Rayne Foundation	Multi year grant supporting the People's Music Sussex programme, second and third instalments received in 2023/24 and 2024/25.
Children in Need	Multi year grant support Musical Beacons Sussex programme delivery, second and third instalments received in 2023/24 and 2024/25.
The Ernerst Kleinwort Charitable Trust	Grant funding received in 2024/25 financial year for People's Music Sussex programme delivery.
The Foreshore Trust	Grant funding received in 2024/25 financial year for Musical Beacons Broomgrove programme delivery.
City Bridge Foundation	Next instalments of multi year grant received in 2024/25 financial year for Musical Beacons London and People's Music London programme delivery.
Heads On Mental Health Collaborative VCSE Fund	Grant funding received in 2023/24 for People's Music Sussex programme delivery.
The Sir Bernard and Lady Schreier Foundation	Grant funding received in 2023/24 for People's Music Sussex programme delivery.
Hastings Borough Council / Shared Prosperity Fund	Grant funding received in 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial year for Musical Beacons Broomgrove programme delivery.
London Borough of Waltham Forest - Adult Learning Fund	Grant funding received in 2023/24 to support People's Music London programme delivery.
Garfield Weston Foundation	Grant funding received in 2024/25 to support People's Music programme delivery.
The Foyle Foundation	Grant funding received in 2024/25 to support People's Music programme delivery.
The Isabel Blackman Foundation	Grant funding received in 2024/25 for Musical Beacons Broomgrove programme delivery.
The Magdalen and Lasher Charity	Grant funding received in 2024/25 for Musical Beacons Broomgrove programme delivery.
<i>Unrestricted Funds:</i>	
Funder	Description of Fund
Postcode Community Trust	Grant funding received in 2023/24 and 2024/25 to support Soundcastle's charitable objectives and core operations.
The Chalk Cliff Trust	Grant funding received in 2024/25 financial year in support of the Musical Beacons Sussex programme.
London Borough of Waltham Forest	Donation received in 2024/25 financial year in support of the Musical Beacons London programme.

Note 12: Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
Fund balances at 31 March 2025 represented by:			
Tangible assets	319	-	319
Current assets/(liabilities)	131,233	60,381	191,614
	131,552	60,381	191,933

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
Fund balances at 31 March 2024 represented by:			
Tangible assets	410	-	410
Current assets/(liabilities)	127,388	57,998	185,386
	127,798	57,998	185,796

Note 13: Trustees remuneration and expenses

The trustees, nor any persons connected with them received no remuneration or benefits for the performance of their duties.

Akhila Krishnan paid Soundcastle a monthly fee of £200 for a desk space at the Soundcastle offices for the period April 2024 to March 2025.

Trustee Indemnity insurance was purchased on 31 March 2025.

Note 14: Related party transactions

During the period in question there were no related party transactions: