



WEST OF ENGLAND MUSIC AND ARTS

Private Company Limited by Guarantee

Charity Registration No: 1204508

Company Registration No: 14782097

Supporting everyone to thrive and achieve through the power of music, arts and culture

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 29 AUGUST 2025

WEST OF ENGLAND MUSIC AND ARTS

Chair's Report

Period ended 29 August 2025

	Pages
Legal and administrative information	2
Chair's Report	3
Report of the Trustees	4-22
Report of the Independent Auditors	23-26
Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities	27
Consolidated Balance Sheet	28
Individual Balance Sheet	29
Consolidated Cash Flow Statement	30
Individual Cash Flow Statement	31
Notes forming part of the Financial Statements	32-46

1. The structural and administrative details for the Charity are as follows:
 - 1.1. Name: West of England Music and Arts
 - 1.2. Type of entity: Private Company Limited by Guarantee
 - 1.3. Date of incorporation: 5 April 2023
 - 1.4. Registered Charity Number: 1204508
 - 1.5. Company number: 14782097
 - 1.6. Registered and principal office: Little Stoke Primary School, Little Stoke Lane, Little Stoke, Bristol, BS34 6HY
2. The Trustees as at the date of this report (the "Trustees") are:
 - 2.1. M Thareja
 - 2.2. C S Freda
 - 2.3. S Smith (appointed 28th November 2025)
 - 2.4. A William-Jones (appointed 17th November 2025)
3. The bankers are: Co-operative Bank
Po Box 250
Skelmersdale
WN8 6WT
4. The solicitors are: Veale Wasburgh Vizards LLP
Narrow Quay House
Narrow Quay
Bristol
BS1 4QA
5. The auditors are: Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited
3rd Floor
44 Peter Street
Manchester
M2 5GP

Chair's Statement

This has been another year of strong, sustained delivery for WEMA, and one that gives the Board of Trustees genuine cause for pride. Across our three strands of work, we have seen the breadth and depth of what music, arts and culture can do for children, young people and families when they are given the right conditions to thrive and achieve.

Our Music Hub continued to reach schools, families and young musicians across Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire, supporting hundreds of young people to discover and develop their musical lives. The stories in this report — of young people finding their voice, building confidence, pursuing professional careers in music — are a testament to the transformative power of sustained music education. Matthew, who started trombone in a whole-class programme and is now applying to conservatoire, or Grace, who joined the training band as a shy and nervous child and now performs at national festivals: these are not exceptional outcomes. They are what WEMA makes possible, year after year.

Our Creative Health strand delivered music therapy and wellbeing programmes to young people and families facing significant challenges — school refusal, anxiety, complex support needs, profound learning disabilities. The therapy and inclusion teams work in places and with people that other provision cannot reach, and the impact of that work is profound. We are particularly proud of the work with Parent Carer forums in Bath and Weston-super-Mare, developed in direct response to what families told us they needed, and of the continued growth of our Unscripted programme, where 90% of young people reported feeling happier after each session.

The Cultural Education Hub, now in its second year with £310,000 of investment from the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority and Arts Council England, has begun to demonstrate what is possible when creative practitioners are properly supported to work alongside schools. 5,000 students have had access to experiences they would not otherwise have had. 24 creative freelancers have been supported to develop sustainable careers in education. Teachers across the region are richer for what they have learned.

The national landscape for music education continues to evolve, and WEMA's position within it is strong. As the established delivery organisation for music education across BANES, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire, with a track record built over many years, WEMA is well placed to shape what comes next. We are also quickly building new areas of work through the Cultural Education Hub across Bristol City and the wider West of England — extending WEMA's reach into new communities. On behalf of the Board, I want to thank every member of our staff team for the expertise, dedication and warmth that is evident in every page of this report.

We are also deeply grateful to our funders, partners, supporters and volunteers whose generosity and commitment make everything in this report possible.



M Thareja
Chair of Trustees

The trustees present their report together with the financial statements for the period ended 29 August 2025.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in the notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 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 issued in October 2019.

Objectives and activities

Our Vision

Inspiring everyone to thrive and achieve through music, arts and culture.

Our Mission

WEMA provides music education, creative health services and cultural education across the West of England (Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Bristol City), ensuring that every child and young person, regardless of background, ability or circumstance, has access to transformative arts experiences.

Our Three Strands

WEMA works across three interconnected strands, delivered through the charity and its trading subsidiary West of England Music Limited (WEML):

Music Hub

As the Department for Education funded Music Hub for Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire, WEMA provides instrumental and vocal tuition, ensemble playing, whole-class music programmes, CPD for teachers, and access to music centres, events and performances. WEMA works with nearly 300 schools and music organisations across the region — reaching music leaders and headteachers who in turn shape the musical lives of tens of thousands of children in their schools. WEMA also works directly with approximately 5,000 young people through its music centres, ensembles, tuition and community programmes.

Creative Health

Our Creative Health strand brings together music therapy, wellbeing programmes and inclusion work. We provide music therapy in schools, special schools and community settings; run wellbeing and nurture programmes for children and young people facing the greatest challenges; and deliver specialist inclusion provision for disabled and neurodivergent young people and their families.

Cultural Hub

The West of England Cultural Education Hub, funded by the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority and Arts Council England, connects schools, educators, creative practitioners and cultural organisations to bring high-quality arts and cultural opportunities to children and young people across the region.

Charitable Objectives

West of England Music and Arts promotes music, arts and cultural activities which benefit vulnerable, disadvantaged and minority groups and those who show exceptional talent. We do this by supporting work with children, young people and adults in creating, performing, appreciating and otherwise interacting with creativity for their emotional, social, health or education benefit.

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have had due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in planning and delivering WEMA's activities. All three strands of WEMA's work deliver direct, evidenced public benefit to children, young people, families and communities across the West of England:

- Music Hub provision delivers instrumental tuition, ensemble opportunities, whole-class programmes and CPD to nearly 300 schools and music organisations, reaching approximately 5,000 young people directly and influencing the musical lives of tens of thousands more through the teachers and music leaders WEMA supports.
- Creative Health services provide music therapy and wellbeing support to young people facing significant challenges — including school refusal, severe anxiety, complex learning disabilities and neurodivergence — in settings where statutory provision is unavailable or insufficient. In 2024-25, WEMA's therapy service supported 15 clients across 8 schools and settings.
- The Cultural Education Hub targets its creative education offer at schools in communities with the highest levels of deprivation, reaching over 9,000 students and supporting 24 freelance creative practitioners to develop sustainable careers in education.

Pricing and Access Policy

WEMA is committed to ensuring that cost is never a barrier to participation. Financial assistance is available for families who cannot afford tuition or ensemble fees, and the charity actively promotes its bursary and subsidised access schemes. Cultural Hub workshops are provided free to schools. Unscripted and similar family inclusion sessions are offered at low or no cost to families with complex needs. Where WEMA charges for services, fees are set at a level consistent with the charity's mission and are benchmarked against comparable provision across the region.

Achievements & Performance

All case studies and quotes are used with the permission of those involved

WEMA's work in 2024-25 reached children, young people and families across three local authority areas and beyond. The table below summarises total reach across all three strands; detailed achievements and impact evidence for each strand follow.

10,000+ Children & young people in sustained engaging in music and arts	800+ Children and young people receiving free or subsidised access	300+ schools & music organisations supported
£1m+ of grant funded programmes delivered	50 + Wellbeing and inclusion session delivered	24 creative freelancers supported

Music Hub

WEMA's Music Hub is the foundation of music education across three local authority areas. Through instrumental tuition, whole-class programmes, music centres, ensembles, singing festivals and teacher CPD, the Hub ensures that every child has access to high-quality music opportunities — regardless of their school, background or family income.

We deliver this combined strategic and delivery role through:

- music-specialist relationship managers supporting schools with one-to-one meetings, CPD for individual teachers, schools and MAT-wide training
- Over 150 teachers, delivering lessons and ensembles in schools and through our network of music centres, short courses, workshops and our summer residential course
- A range of inclusion programmes for young people with SEND, neurodiversity and those from minority and hard to reach communities.
- Subsidised or free access to activities and instruments for those who cannot afford to take part otherwise
- Working with partners such as Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Future Talent, National Children's Orchestra, ParaOrchestra, Bath Spa University, Alex Gichohi (ZangiMusic), DJ Ellie Phunk and others to deliver a broad and vibrant offer.
- A range of toolkits, training programmes and resources to support schools and young people.

In total, we have delivered over 50,000 hours of activity, including tuition for just over 5,000 children and young people in schools, 800 young musicians attending our weekly music centres where they play in bands, orchestras and ensembles and many more taking part in workshops, courses, events and performances. Underpinning this wide access for so many young musicians, WEMA supports those who cannot afford to pay fees with free access to music centres, free instruments and reduced cost lessons.

Services users, particularly children and young people contribute to the design of our programmes, ensuring we meet the needs and aspirations of our service users. Opportunities cover a wide range of styles and traditions including traditional acoustic instruments to rock, pop and contemporary music, music production, DJing, composing and songwriting.

A Musical Journey: Matthew

Perhaps no story better illustrates what WEMA's Music Hub makes possible than that of Matthew. He started trombone through a whole-class Music Explorers programme at his school in Year 4. He continued with WEMA lessons through primary school, then joined the Little Stoke Development Centre, working his way through all three wind bands. His talent and dedication took him to Bristol Cathedral Choir School as a Music Specialist, then to Wells Cathedral School Sixth Form. He has attended WEMA Youth Orchestra, signed up for the summer residential course, and is now applying to conservatoire. His journey began with a classroom programme — and it is still going.

From Shy to Star; Grace

Grace joined the training band on drums as an extremely shy and nervous child. She worked her way through WEMA's three bands and now performs in Western Winds, where she will represent WEMA at the Music for Youth National Festival. She has also joined the Rock and Pop Centre and performed at the Young Musicians Showcase. Her mother's letter to the WEMA team captures what sustained music education does for young people that no statistic can:

"Watching her going in each Saturday morning with a spring in her step, and coming out grinning has been wonderful, especially as she is usually really quite shy and nervous of new things. And she invited so many people to the concert, she was so excited about it! It is already doing her so much good."

Grace's mother

Unscripted: Inclusion Through Music

Unscripted is a creative music programme for young people aged 8 to 14 with low-level additional needs, running every school holiday in Weston-super-Mare. The holiday-course based programme has, this year, engaged 17 young people across 50 individual enrolments.

90%

reported feeling happier
after each session

87%

reported increased
confidence

100%

reported improved musical
skills (from Aug 2025)

88–100%

reported making new
friends

"Friends and music helped them reintegrate. I am so grateful."

Parent of a young person who had been unable to attend school all term

"They feel they can be themselves and have built confidence in making friends and trusting adults — we are so grateful to have found Unscripted."

Parent, Unscripted participant

One young person learned guitar chords overnight and performed them confidently the following day. Another developed their sense of rhythm across multiple projects and became genuinely skilled at DJing. A third disclosed for the first time, after years at school, that they sing in a band and choir — and within hours was flourishing as a performer.

Music-Makers: Responding to What Families Need

WEMA piloted Music-Makers — a bespoke session developed in direct response to requests from families attending North Somerset Parents and Carers Working Together (NSPCWT) in Weston-super-Mare. Having offered drop-in music-making at NSPCWT's family stay-and-play sessions, we worked with the organisation to create something more substantial.

Three sessions were delivered in one day to families with children ranging in age from 2 to 12, with a range of complex needs including neurodivergence, sensory processing difficulties, severe and profound learning disabilities, mental ill health, physical impairments and deafness. All five families who responded to a feedback questionnaire reported that the sessions met their children's needs.

"Very relaxed and spontaneous."

Parent, Music-Makers session

"Nice to have fun and be silly together with other people."

Parent, Music-Makers session

The feedback confirmed a clear principle: for this cohort, low-demand, sensory-aware, unstructured environments are not a preference — they are a necessity. One family, whose child attends a special school and has a severe learning disability, praised the team for tailoring songs to ones their child already knew. Another commended the team's sensitive handling of a meltdown mid-session. The pilot will inform future programming across the region.

A Lifetime of Music: The Long View

WEMA's reach across decades of young people's lives is perhaps its greatest testament. Among those whose musical journeys began with WEMA:

- Gavin played percussion at BANES Wednesday Centre for years before winning a place at Wells Cathedral School as a pianist. He became Organ Scholar at Bath Abbey and won a national young composers competition. His father now plays trombone in WEMA's adult ensemble — a whole family committed to WEMA across generations.
- Miriam had flute and singing lessons through BANES, sang in Cantilena for years, gained a music degree, taught for BANES, and now works as a manager for a major overseas national symphony orchestra.
- Jack had euphonium lessons at his Special School through WEMA, played in wind and brass bands at BANES Music Centre, attended multiple Bryanston residentials, and went on to study at BIMM on drums.

These are not coincidences. They are the compound interest of a Music Hub that stays in young people's lives long enough to matter.

Creative Health

We give valuable support to those in challenging circumstances, using the unique power of music to communicate and connect, explore and manage emotions, and for healing.

Our team includes experienced wellbeing practitioners and qualified music therapists, who support positive change through a range of wellbeing programmes, music therapy, nurture projects, and inclusion programmes for children with additional needs or barriers to learning.

Music Therapy

Our team of seven qualified and experienced music therapists work in schools, client's homes and other settings across the West of England.

We adapt to the needs of each individual, focusing either on receptive music therapy (listening) or work in the moment in an improvised way. This allows a sense of freedom and creative expression, which can be helpful in place of speaking about difficulties or trauma.

Our services cover a variety of ages and settings, including adult residential care homes and day centres, community centres, libraries, client's homes, schools, and outdoor learning environments.

Wellbeing

Music can have a positive impact on wellbeing, social, emotional and mental health, and resilience. Our services are open to everyone, using music-making to connect with participants' needs in community, healthcare and school settings.

Nurture

This year saw the development of our nurture programme, working with young people identified by schools as requiring extra support with social and emotional needs.

Nurture Through Music sessions are creative and adapted to the needs of the student. We use a trauma-informed approach, with an aim of improving wellbeing, lessening anxiety, and boosting a positive sense of self and belonging.

School based Music Therapy — C's Story

When C, aged 15, was referred to WEMA's music therapy service, they had a team of professionals around them — physiotherapist, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist, neuropsychologist and clinical psychologist. C had learning difficulties, memory difficulties, regular epileptic seizures, low self-esteem and anxiety. They presented as a shy young person who wanted their mum to stay in the room, unable to answer questions without looking to her for reassurance.

Over three years of music therapy, C opened up about family relationships, past trauma and hopes for the future. Music became the medium through which they could express emotions, regulate their feelings, and develop a sense of self. The therapist brought instruments from around the world, supported C to write songs, explore emotions through lyrics, and discover music as a tool for daily life.

C is now 18. They lead their own sessions — currently centred on K-pop, singing and dancing. They say: 'Music is my comfort place.' C has transformed into a happy, confident young adult. The whole team regularly remarks that C is unrecognisable from the shy child they knew three years ago.

Music Therapy: Case Study — M at their school

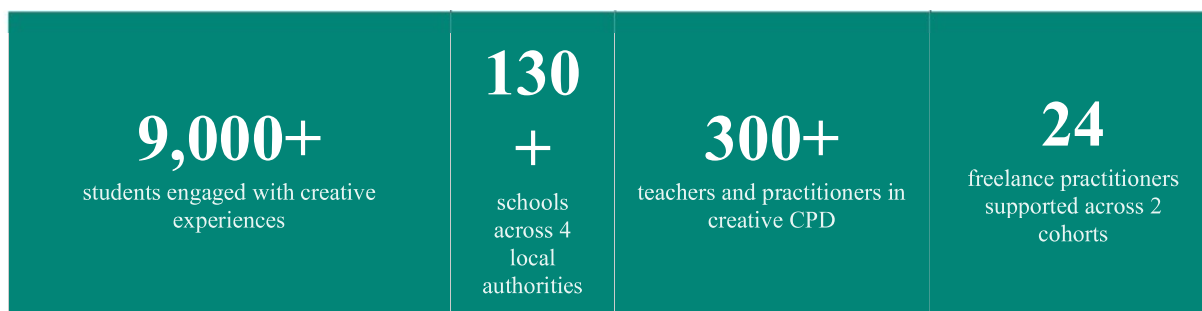
"Having access to therapy through school is invaluable and allows M to see school as part of the solution, not the problem. It had been such a struggle getting support — the family had been refused access to CAMHS for the fourth time. M was having severe panic attacks, banging their head on the floor going into school, and became agoraphobic for a while. The change in them at school is wonderful to see through dedicated care, patience and understanding from the inclusion team, and having access to strategies like music therapy and forest school. There are so many desperate families and children that can't get access to support through the NHS — I am more than happy to support in any way I can getting this type of support into additional schools."

Parent of M, Year 7 pupil

M was a 13-year-old Year 7 pupil who had been out of school for twelve months due to extreme anxiety. Referred to WEMA's music therapy service, they were visibly immersed in music from the very first session — making eye contact, smiling, engaging with the drum kit and a range of other instruments. The goal was to support M to reintegrate into school and find a positive reason for attending. Their parent's testimony — describing four CAMHS refusals, panic attacks and agoraphobia — makes clear the gap that WEMA's therapy provision fills.

Cultural Hub

The West of England Cultural Education Hub, funded by the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority and Arts Council England, launched in late 2023 and is now 18 months into its two-year first phase. It was designed not as a delivery body but as a connector — triangulating three groups of people: freelance creative practitioners, the education workforce, and children and young people, particularly those who do not ordinarily access these opportunities. The Hub sits in the middle, providing training, funding, brokerage and a growing evidence base.



Developing Creative Practitioners

Twenty-four freelance creative practitioners have been supported across two cohorts of the Creatives in Schools programme. Every grant came with wraparound CPD — not just funding, but training, mentoring and network-building that makes the difference between a one-off workshop and a sustained career in education.

Early evidence from the programme is compelling: practitioners are reporting significant gains in their skills, knowledge and confidence as educators, and schools are describing impact that goes well beyond individual sessions. Independent research into the full programme is being commissioned and will report in the final phase of the Hub — forming a central part of next year's annual report.

The Practitioners: A Sample of What the Hub Makes Possible

The breadth of practice supported through the Creatives in Schools grants reflects the range the Hub model can accommodate — from insect anatomy to analogue photography, from acrobalance to drama. A sample of the practitioners and their work:

Marian Hill – Buzz & Scuttle

Illustrator and Senior Lecturer in Illustration at UWE Bristol, Marian Hill brought her Buzz & Scuttle workshops into four schools across Bath and Yate, reaching 376 children. Cross-curricular sessions combined science and art through collage, with every child taking home a handmade badge. Children's artwork was subsequently displayed on vinyl banners in Victoria Park playground in Bath — a public legacy that made children's creativity visible in their own community.

"Many children didn't consider themselves arty, but the simplicity of the workshop and all the scaffolding that supported it enabled those less confident to do a lovely piece of work."

Teaching Assistant, Oldfield Park Junior School

Toby Hulse – Doing, Talking, Writing

Playwright Toby Hulse delivered 19 workshops across five Weston-super-Mare primary schools, reaching over 500 pupils. Using drama to unlock creative writing, he developed a teacher-friendly model explicitly designed to leave schools with techniques they could continue using. He noted that Weston schools were initially more cautious about hosting visiting artists than Bristol schools — a confidence gap the Hub is directly addressing.

"Delivering these workshops numerous times in a wide variety of settings gave me the opportunity to develop and hone what the teaching and learning offer is in considerable detail — so that discovery and learning built progressively through each session, and pointed towards further work that the class teacher could do."

Toby Hulse, Creative Practitioner

Maddie McGowan - Acrobalance

Circus artist Maddie McGowan delivered nine workshops across six schools — including a SEND school and a Year 7 careers day — reaching around 300 children. Sessions built trust, communication and shared achievement through acrobatic balancing. The surprise outcomes were consistent: children who staff did not expect to engage with a physical workshop did really well.

"Children were supportive of each other and amazed by the photos of what they had achieved."

Teacher feedback

Nigel Goldsmith at Cotham School – What Full Funding Makes Possible

Photographer Nigel Goldsmith worked with Year 12 art students at Cotham School in Bristol — making cameras from aluminium tins, taking analogue photographs and developing them in the school's disused dark room. Teacher Ms Cydney Forbes described the impact simply:

"I just thought it was so incredible to have something fully funded — especially as resources are tight across the board."

Ms Cydney Forbes, Art Teacher, Cotham School

"They will just be like, wow, I can make a picture and I don't need to have a degree in physics or something. It's that simple. Those are moments that you just think — yeah, that's what it's about."

Nigel Goldsmith, Photographer

Cotham also participated in a Hub CPD workshop at Bristol Old Vic, where Ms Forbes learned drama games that went directly into the school's musical theatre club. The school worked with two different artists across two year groups — both aligned to the existing curriculum. This curriculum integration is exactly what the Hub is designed to create.

Holly Dabbs – Miku and the Trees, Twerton Infant School

Artist and forest school leader Holly Dabbs worked with Twerton Infant School in Bath — a small school in a pocket of deprivation with high levels of SEND, free school meals eligibility, and English as an additional language. The residency used the school's woodland area as an art studio, working outdoors and following the children's own curiosity. The impact on both pupils and staff went well beyond what anyone expected.

"We've got a high proportion of children with EAL — English as an additional language. And I think we've noticed so much change in those children. It really has unlocked learning for them and made learning really meaningful and something that they can access. It's removed barriers — and I think that's such an amazing thing to see. But for all the staff to have seen that — you know, by changing slightly how you approach the teaching of something, it unlocks things."

Astral, Deputy Headteacher, Twerton Infant School

"I've seen people use the words on a daily basis. People are taking their classes out as a whole class approach. I've seen maths, I've seen English, science — all the things that you might think, oh well, we can't do that outside. People are. It's really changed. You really have instilled a confidence in the staff that you don't need to take very much money with you, you don't need loads of planning — you just have the ideas and then you take the ideas from the children."

Astral, Deputy Headteacher, Twerton Infant School

The legacy is being written into the school's curriculum. Twerton is building creative outdoor learning into every year of their next curriculum cycle, developing a skills and progression document for art and design from nursery to Year 2. As the deputy headteacher put it:

"It just opens up such a world of opportunities to enable people to approach the curriculum in a more creative way. It's been such a privilege to see you working and to gain insight into different ways of doing things — and to see what has actually been produced by the children with your support is just so heartwarming."

Astral, Deputy Headteacher, Twerton Infant School

Ali Brown – The Creative Dispensary

Ali Brown delivered 10 creative wellbeing workshops across four primary schools, working with 140 pupils in Years 3 and 4. Students explored how creativity can help notice and express feelings, calm the mind and

connect with others — co-creating 'creative prescriptions' that were left with each school as reusable resources.

"When we were blowing the ink, it felt like we were blowing our anger away."

Pupil

"The session made me feel calm and free."

Pupil

"Being part of this programme has been a really positive experience. Having the space and support to develop an idea into a full workshop has been invaluable."

Ali Brown, Creative Practitioner

Creative Residencies: Schools, Challenges, Legacies

Creative Residencies have placed artists alongside school communities for sustained periods, enabling deeper relationships between practitioners, teachers and pupils. Each residency was co-designed with the school around its own specific priorities — precisely the locally responsive model that the Francis Curriculum Review has since called for. Residencies in the 2024-25 academic year have been delivered at schools including Twerton, Kingsweston, Marshfield, Bridge Learning Campus, Priory and Horton, with practitioners including Holly Dabbs, Kenzi Ireland, Batch Gueye, Brave Bold Drama, Super Culture, Toby Hulse, and Lamplighter Arts CIC. More are confirmed for 2025-26.

A consistent finding across residencies has been the impact on teachers as well as pupils. The Hub model embeds CPD within delivery — teachers learn alongside artists in real classrooms, gaining practical skills they continue to use long after the practitioner has left. This is the legacy the Hub is designed to create, and the evidence of it is growing.

Creative Careers

Creative careers work is also in development: plans are being developed in partnership with Bristol Museums, Bristol Works, the Wessex Inspiration Network and Bath Spa University to create opportunities for young people to engage directly with creative professionals and understand the pathways into creative careers. This work will be reported in full next year.

YoungPeople4Change and the Bristol Bus Boycott

We have begun a multi-year programme with Curiosity Unlimited and a range of Bristol based partners to improve attitudes towards community cohesion, through celebration of the Windrush generation and the impact of the Bristol Bus Boycott. This programme will roll out in Autumn 2025 with a range of workshops, youth action activities, curriculum resources and celebration events.

What the Evidence Is Showing

With 18 months of the first Hub phase complete, the evidence building across programmes is consistent and clear. Schools in communities with the highest levels of deprivation are reporting outcomes — for children with SEND, with EAL, with low confidence — that they did not anticipate. Practitioners are developing in ways that will sustain their careers in education. Teachers are gaining skills that are changing how they approach the curriculum. The final six months of the phase will focus on deepening this evidence further, with independent research reporting in early 2026 — and forming a central part of the picture in next year's annual report.

The Cultural Hub is grateful to organisations who support our work as part of the Hub's steering group and our ambassadors.

Acknowledgements

WEMA is grateful to all the individuals, organisations, trusts and foundations whose generosity and partnership make our work possible. Our thanks go to:

Principal Funders

- Department for Education — Music Hub funding
- Arts Council England — Music Hub and Cultural Education Hub funding
- West of England Mayoral Combined Authority — Cultural Education Hub funding

Partner Organisations

- Aardman Animation
- BANES Parent Carer Forum
- Bath and North East Somerset Council
- Bath Education Trust
- Bath Philharmonia
- Bath Spa University
- Britten Pears Arts
- Bristol Beacon
- Bristol Museum
- Bristol Old Vic
- Bristol Works
- Cambridge Institute for Music Therapy Research / Anglia Ruskin University (CIMTR)
- Curiosity Unltd
- Future Talent
- International Guitar Foundation
- Jack Hazeldine Foundation
- Jessie's Fund
- Live Music Now!
- London Sinfonietta
- Luke Jerram Foundation
- Music for Miniatures
- Music Workshop
- National Children's Orchestra
- Natural England
- North Somerset Council
- North Somerset Parents and Carers Working Together (NSPCWT)
- Playground Proms
- Sirona Health
- South Gloucestershire Council
- St George's Bristol
- Superculture
- Tobacco Factory Theatre
- University of Bristol
- University of the West of England (UWE)
- We The Curious
- West of England Centre for Independent Living (WECIL)
- Wessex Inspiration Network

Our People

None of this work would be possible without the dedication and expertise of WEMA's staff team and the 150 teachers, therapists, wellbeing practitioners and creative practitioners employed through West of England Music Limited. We are also grateful to our Board of Trustees — Meeta Thareja, Catherine Freda, Holly Radford-James and Ingrid McLean — for their commitment and guidance throughout the year.

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution

West of England Music and Arts is a charitable company limited by guarantee, registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (Charity No. 1204508) and Companies House (Company No. 14782097). It is governed by its Articles of Association. The Annual Report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' Report and a Directors' Report under company law.

Organisational Structure

WEMA employs 13 staff directly. Its trading subsidiary, West of England Music Limited (WEML), employs approximately 150 teachers, therapists, wellbeing and creative practitioners across Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol City, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. All WEML delivery staff are employed (not self-employed) and WEMA's full safer recruitment process applies to them. WEML donates its taxable profits to WEMA by way of Gift Aid.

Recruitment, Appointment and Induction of Trustees

Trustees are recruited through open advertisement and co-option processes in accordance with the Articles of Association. The Board seeks trustees with a diversity of expertise, background and lived experience. All new trustees receive a formal induction covering WEMA's charitable objects, governance responsibilities, safeguarding obligations, and the organisation's strategic context. Trustees are required to complete relevant training, including safeguarding. The Board includes a dedicated Safeguarding Trustee (Ingrid McLean). Trustees serve as volunteers and receive no remuneration for their trustee roles.

Board Committees and Advisory Groups

The Board of Trustees meets quarterly. It is supported by a Finance and Audit Committee, which has delegated responsibility for financial oversight, risk management and audit.

Music Hub Governance

From September 2024, the Department for Education, via Arts Council England as fund manager, changed the way Music Hubs are governed across England. WEMA has long been the music education organisation for Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire, with Bristol Beacon delivering the same role for Bristol City. Both organisations continue to serve the communities and schools they have always served but from September 2024, this new national governance framework brought the two organisations into a formal regional partnership for the West of England Music Hub. This new partnership strengthens both organisations in their delivery of music services for schools, children and young people.

Trustees

The Board of Trustees meets quarterly and is responsible for the strategic direction, financial oversight and governance of the charity. Trustees serve as volunteers and bring expertise in music education, safeguarding, finance, arts leadership and charity governance.

Safeguarding

WEMA takes its safeguarding responsibilities with the utmost seriousness. The charity operates across regulated activity with children and vulnerable adults. WEMA has two Designated Safeguarding Leads: Heather Walters (Adult Safeguarding Lead) and Claire Schollick (Child Safeguarding Lead), supported by the Chief Executive and the Safeguarding Trustee. All staff and practitioners are subject to WEMA's full safer recruitment process including DBS checks at the appropriate level and ongoing safeguarding training. WEMA's safeguarding policies are reviewed annually and are compliant with Keeping Children Safe in Education. The DPO is contactable at dpo@wema.org.uk.

Risk Management

Principal Risk	Mitigation
Stagnation of DfE funding against rising staff costs reduces real-terms budget, threatening delivery of the growth strategy and current provision levels	Flexible ways of working means WEMA can be responsive to changes in funding and expectations. Trading arm delivering strongly. DfE understanding of the fact that less can be done with less funding.
Economic pressures reduce parental spending power and school budgets, leading to reduced participation — with greatest impact on vulnerable students. School budget constraints also limit uptake of workshops, CPD and live music, and reduce the number of EHCPs awarded, directly affecting ability to participate	Monitoring participation demographics quarterly; expanding remission of fees and subsidised access offer; fundraising role planned; coach subsidy policy in place; building MAT-level relationships to secure institutional rather than individual school buy-in
Transition to the National Centre for Arts and Music Education (NCAME) from September 2026 reshapes the national Music Hub landscape. Funding models, accountability structures and the role of delivery partners are unknown, creating significant medium-term uncertainty	Active engagement with national policy development; WEMA's performance data and track record position it well for the new landscape; scenario planning underway; ACE relationship maintained throughout transition period
Proposed Employment Bill — abolition of zero-hours contracts and guaranteed minimum hours requirements would fundamentally affect WEMA's model of employing approximately 150 delivery practitioners on flexible contracts. WEMA is approaching 181 employees with the 250-	Active monitoring of the Bill's progress (implementation unlikely before mid-2026); scenario planning for minimum-hours model

employee Companies House threshold a live concern	
Safeguarding failures across a large distributed workforce	Full safer recruitment for all staff and practitioners; named safeguarding leads; annual policy review; mandatory training; DPO oversight; KCSIE 2024 compliance
Loss of key staff in specialist roles	Succession planning; competitive remuneration; investment in staff development and CPD; strong organisational culture

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have set a reserves policy requiring WEMA and WEML to maintain a minimum of three months' operating costs as free reserves. The target is reviewed annually in the context of the risk register and the organisation's income profile. The Trustees consider this level appropriate given WEMA's income dependency on public sector contracts and grant funding, and the lead times required for programme planning and staffing. The current level of free reserves and progress against target are set out in the Financial Review.

Risk of Unplanned Closure

The Trustees do not foresee any significant risk of unplanned closure. The organisation has strong statutory relationships, a diversified income base across three strands, and established governance structures. Reserves are maintained to cover contractual commitments to staff and practitioners in the event of an unanticipated reduction in income.

Future Plans

WEMA's priorities for 2025-26 and beyond reflect the organisation's ambition to deepen its impact across all three strands while building financial resilience and extending its reach into communities currently underserved.

In the Music Hub, the focus is on sustaining and growing instrumental and ensemble provision across the region, developing multi-academy trust relationships more systematically, and building a stronger presence in schools that do not yet engage with WEMA's offer. The national Music Hub governance structure has changed, but WEMA's delivery, relationships and day-to-day work with schools and families remain as they have always been. The creation of the National Centre for Arts and Music Education (NCAME) from September 2026 is a policy development WEMA is actively engaged with — the organisation's track record and regional expertise place it well to contribute to and benefit from the new national landscape.

In Creative Health, the clinical evidence for WEMA's therapy model is strong — 90% of clients achieved or exceeded their Goal-Based Outcomes in 2024-25. The clinical case for WEMA's therapy model is strong; the challenge is making it financially sustainable against a backdrop of constrained school and NHS budgets. WEMA is developing a mixed traded and subsidised model, developing a Music and Imagery online therapy offer, and building partnerships with health commissioners. Research findings from the Cambridge Institute for Music Therapy Research's Nurture Programme — led by WEMA — are due for

publication, and WEMA's Head of Therapy and Wellbeing has been invited to present the findings at the BAMT national conference in November 2026.

For the Cultural Education Hub, securing a second phase of funding is the immediate priority. Momentum has been built with schools, creative practitioners and partners across the region, and the evidence gathering underway will provide a compelling case for continuation and expansion. Independent research into the programme is due to report in early 2026. The next phase will deepen what has been started, extend reach into Bristol and other underserved communities, and develop a formal creative careers pathway offer, with WEMA playing a coordinating role.

Across the organisation, WEMA's 2025-2030 strategic plan sets an ambition to be recognised as a major regional organisation in arts, education and healthcare — a centre of excellence that enables its partners and communities to be the best they can be. Building multi-year funding relationships, developing the organisation's premises and digital infrastructure, and growing the workforce to reflect the communities WEMA serves are all priorities for the plan period.

To enable this expansion, WEMA will be appointing new roles in 2025-26. These include a Chief Finance Officer, bringing the previously outsourced finance function in-house, a Chief Operating Officer to oversee the growing infrastructure and freeing the Chief Executive to further develop the outward facing work of the Charity, and a Head of Fundraising to enable our growth plans through new funding streams.

Financial Review

Overview

The Group reported total income of £3,354,334 for the period ended 29 August 2025 (2024: £3,010,159), reflecting continued growth in both grant-funded and traded activity. Income comprised £2,053,493 of trading income and £1,300,841 of donations and grants, primarily from government and Arts Council England funding. Total expenditure for the period amounted to £3,127,553 (2024: £2,613,917), with the majority relating to staff costs in support of programme delivery. This resulted in a net surplus of £226,781 (2024: £396,242), increasing total funds to £623,023 at the period end. Cash balances remained strong at £1,317,480, supporting the organisation's operating model and future commitments. The Group ended the period with £600,023 of unrestricted reserves, providing a strong financial foundation to support ongoing delivery and manage risk.

Income

WEMA's income in 2024-25 was drawn from three principal sources. The largest was Department for Education Music Hub funding administered through Arts Council England, which funds the core Music Hub delivery across Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. The second was Arts Council England and West of England Mayoral Combined Authority funding for the Cultural Education Hub, totalling £311,000 over the two-year programme. The third was traded income generated through West of England Music Limited (WEML), including instrumental tuition fees, music centre memberships, ensemble fees and music therapy contracts. WEML donates its taxable profits to WEMA by way of Gift Aid. Additional income was generated through grants, trusts and foundations supporting specific projects including Sound in Nature and individual therapy clients.

Expenditure

The majority of WEMA's expenditure is staff costs, reflecting the people-intensive nature of music education, therapy and creative health delivery. The charity directly employs 13 staff; WEML employs approximately 150 delivery practitioners. The charity continues to invest in the quality, training and conditions of its workforce as its principal asset and the foundation of all its charitable activities.

Reserves

The Trustees monitor reserves against the policy target of three months' operating costs on a quarterly basis. The level of free reserves is reported to the Board at each meeting alongside a forecast to year-end. Current free reserves: £623,023 against a target of 3 months operating costs.

Going concern

The Trustees are satisfied that WEMA remains a going concern. No material uncertainties have been identified that would cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue operating for at least twelve months from the date of approval of these financial statements.

Investment Policy

The Trustees have power to make any investment that the Board sees fit. Having regard to the liquidity requirements of operating WEMA's programmes, the Board's policy is to hold any surplus funds as cash deposits, seeking to maximise returns whilst minimising credit risk. No investments in equities or other non-cash instruments are currently held.

Fundraising

WEMA raises voluntary income through grants from trusts and foundations, statutory grants, and individual donations. All fundraising activity is carried out by WEMA staff and complies with the standards of the Fundraising Regulator. WEMA does not use commercial participators or cold-calling approaches. No complaints about fundraising were received during the year.

Trustees and Officers

The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year end were as follows;

Trustees;	M Thareja	
	C S Freda	
	I McLean (Resigned 5 November 2025)	
	H Radford-James (Resigned 19 December 2025)	
	M Radoje (resigned 21 January 2025)	
	A William-Jones (Appointed 17 November 2025)	
	S Smith (Appointed 28 November 2025)	
Chair of Trustees:	M Thareja	
Chief Executive Officer:	S Lock	
Senior Leadership Team:	N Quibell	Business Manager
	M Clarke	Cultural Hub Lead
	A Bodiley	Groups and Courses Lead
	E Greeley	Head of Education
	H Walters	Head of Therapy and Wellbeing/Adult Safeguarding Lead
	J Parkinson	Inclusion Lead
	K Elkes	Marketing and Communications
	A Clarke	Partnerships and Programmes Lead
	C Shollick	Schools development Lead/Child Safeguarding Lead

Structure, governance and management

Nature of governing document

West of England Music and Arts was registered as a non-profit making company on 5 April 2023 (ref no. 14782097) and was registered as a UK Charity (reg no. 1204508) by the Charity Commissioners with effect from 29 August 2023.

The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association.

In the event of the company being wound up, Trustees are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

The Charity is a limited company, Limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act.

Organisational structure

West of England Music and Arts wholly owns a trading company called West of England Music Limited (WEML)

The Board of Trustees oversees the work of the Charity and its trading subsidiary. It delegates day to day running of the Chief Executive Officer, who also acts as the Managing Director of the trading arm. The CEO leads the management team who are responsible for the day-to-day delivery of the Charity's aims and activities.

As the Charity establishes itself in its new role, a review of the structure will consider if additional executive officers are necessary to support the CEO in the day-to-day oversight and leadership of the Charity.

Section 172(1) statement

The Trustees, who are also directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law, confirm that throughout the year they have had regard to their duties under Section 172(1) of the Companies Act 2006, which requires them to act in a way that promotes the success of the company for the benefit of its members as a whole, while having regard to (among other matters):

- The likely consequences of any decision in the long term;
- The interests of the Charity's employees and volunteers;
- The need to foster relationships with beneficiaries, donors, funders, suppliers and other key stakeholders;
- The impact of the Charity's operations on the community and the environment;
- The desirability of maintaining a reputation for high standards of conduct;
- The need to act fairly as between members of the company.

In discharging these duties during the year, the Trustees have:

- Continued to align the Charity's strategic decisions with its long-term charitable aims and public benefit obligations;
- Engaged regularly with staff and volunteers through updates, feedback sessions and training, promoting a supportive and inclusive culture;
- Consulted with beneficiaries and key partners in the design and delivery of services;
- Maintained strong governance and risk management practices to safeguard the charity's reputation and financial sustainability;
- Considered environmental and social factors when making operational and investment decisions;
- Ensured transparency and fairness in all dealings with stakeholders, including funders, regulators and service users.

The Board believes that these considerations are integral to fulfilling our mission and delivering long-term value for all stakeholders.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also the directors of West of England Music and Arts for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

Company law requires the Trustees' to prepare financial statements for each financial period. Under company law the Trustee's must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the parent charitable company and the group and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, of the charitable group for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards, comprising FRS 102 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 parent charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that can disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the parent charitable company and the group 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 parent charitable company and the group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud

The Trustees' are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Disclosure of information to auditor

Each Trustee has taken steps that they ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Charity's auditor is aware of that information. The Trustees confirm that there is no relevant information that they know of and of which they know the auditor is unaware.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions on Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The annual report was approved by the Trustees of the Charity on 29/05/2026 and signed on its behalf by;



M Thareja
Chair of Trustees