REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: SC125546 (Scotland)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: SC016130

Report of the Trustees and

Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

for

Gingerbread Edinburgh and Lothian
Project Ltd

Gingerbread Edinburgh and Lothian Project Ltd

Contents of the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

The trustees who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and aims

The primary objective of Gingerbread Edinburgh & Lothian Project Ltd ("the charity") is to assist lone carers and their families in Edinburgh & Lothians through stressful and emotionally challenging times in their lives. Our objectives are:

- To provide lone carer families with information and advice both practically and emotionally, to help them overcome the difficulties of bringing up children on their own.

- To promote a better understanding by society of the needs of lone carer families in the form of publicity and advertising.

- To expand our range of childcare facilities and develop more local self-help groups, to encourage lone carers to become more self-confident, thereby improving the quality of their lives.

These objectives are achieved primarily by providing an information and advice service, free legal and counselling clinics, and affordable quality childcare to all families using our services. We strive to do this by meeting the demands from carers at our clubs and assessing the need to employ more staff members where demand is greatest, which is always an ongoing priority of Gingerbread.

At present, we continue to operate:
- 4 After School Care Clubs
- 1 School Holiday Club
- In-Service Day care (as required)

Note: Our Breakfast Club was disbanded in late 2024 following a review of operational sustainability.

The purposes of the organisation shall be wholly charitable. In particular, the purposes shall be:

- To continue to improve the conditions of life for children and their families through the provision of the activities we offer, and to maintain and develop these activities further.

- To provide care, support, fun and friendship to all the children, young people, carers and families who use our services.

- To nurture and advance the education of children and young people who use our facilities through play, giving them opportunities for individual challenges and personal growth in an environment which values their independence and achievements.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Activities

We aim to continue to provide care, support, fun and friendship in equal measure, whilst encouraging children to be independent and to support personal growth within all our settings and services. We support carers whilst they take on employment, gain further education, or pursue other ventures, through our quality and affordable childcare facilities.

We visit the clubs regularly, ensuring that our After School Care clubs are presentable, that toys and equipment are in good condition, and that all staff and volunteers work in accordance with policies and procedures set out by the organisation.

Staff hold the following qualifications:
- SVQ 2, 3, 4 Playwork
- SVQ 2, 3, 4 CCLD
- SVQ 2 & 3 Scottish Social Services Children & Young People
- SVQ 3 & 4 Management
- A1/V1 Assessing Awards
- BA in Childhood Practice
- Child Protection, First Aid, Food Hygiene, Autism Awareness, and other courses relevant to childcare

The following training bodies are used to ensure our staff continue to develop their knowledge and skills: PA Training, First Stop First Aid, and Capability Scotland.

The continued success of Gingerbread is largely due to the culture of the organisation and the quality of its staff and service. We pride ourselves in being an organisation where children learn through play and where reflective practice is embedded in our daily approach. This provides a basis from which we can retain high levels of performance and support staff development.

We endeavour to continue to achieve the following performance goals:

- Ensuring financial sustainability
- Continuation of the provision of quality services
- Promoting supportive structures for staff
- Extending the service where possible

During 2024/25, the organisation faced a number of operational and financial pressures which are described in detail in the Financial Review section below. These included the ongoing impact of the cost-of-living crisis, a decrease in the number of children attending clubs, and structural cost pressures common to the childcare sector. The organisation undertook a period of review and began a programme of improvement which has continued into 2025/26.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position

During the year the charity has had income of £247,839 (2024: £265,159) and expenditure of £420,572 (2024: £304,677), generating a deficit of £172,733 (2024: £39,518).

Free, unrestricted reserves totalled £427,765, meaning that while a deficit was incurred in the current year, the charity has sufficient reserves to withstand this.

The accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 show a deficit which represents a significant increase on the prior year. The trustees acknowledge this position and wish to provide context for the factors that contributed to it.

The Finance and Business Manager joined the organisation in May 2025, after the end of the financial year under review. Having reviewed the records thoroughly, the following factors have been identified as having contributed to the deficit:

- Fee income: Childcare fees had not been reviewed or increased for approximately three years, meaning income was falling in real terms against rising costs.

- Staffing structure: The organisation had multiple managers engaged on full 37.5-hour contracts simultaneously, placing a significant and unsustainable burden on the wage bill.

- Agency cover: Costs in this period included a catch-up element relating to agency cover from the prior year, inflating the figure beyond what would be considered a normal run-rate.

- IT expenditure: An external IT company was engaged during the year, representing an additional overhead not present in prior periods.

- Mobile telecoms: The organisation was on an unfavourable mobile contract, resulting in expenditure above operational requirements.

- Petty cash controls: Spend through petty cash was not subject to adequate controls, leading to costs that were higher than necessary.

- Occupancy and attendance: There was a notable decrease in the number of children attending the clubs during the year, which directly reduced fee income below budgeted levels.

Underpinning all of the above is a structural challenge that is common across the childcare sector. As a charity, our ability to pass cost increases on to families is genuinely limited, yet the organisation faces the same annual increases in the National Living Wage as any employer. This creates an inherent and growing gap between income and costs that cannot be addressed through fee income alone.

Measures Taken Since the Year End

Since May 2025, the Finance and Business Manager, working alongside the Director and the Board, has taken steps to address each of the areas identified above:

- Fee income has been restructured with a new two-tier membership model implemented from 1 January 2026 - the first fee increase in three years.

- Staffing arrangements have been reviewed and rationalised to ensure a sustainable cost base.

- IT and telecoms contracts have been renegotiated, resulting in materially reduced ongoing costs.

- Petty cash and internal financial controls have been tightened.

- A number of grant applications have been submitted to supplement income, and the organisation is cautiously optimistic about these.

The Board is confident that the measures taken since the year end will support a return to surplus in the current financial year.

Reserves policy
The charity has unrestricted reserves of £433,306 (2024: £606,039), with free unrestricted reserves standing at £427,765 (2024: £596,927).

The policy on reserves is to hold sufficient reserves to ensure the charity can fulfil its objectives. The Board has previously agreed a detailed policy of aiming to hold reserves equivalent to between six and nine months of operating costs. The charity's reserves have remained sufficient to meet this requirement throughout the year under review. Notwithstanding the deficit reported for the year, the organisation held adequate reserves to cover its operating costs and continued to deliver its services without interruption. The Board is committed to maintaining this position and to rebuilding reserves over time.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE
Looking ahead into 2025/26 and beyond, the Board and management have identified the following priorities:

- Continuing to grow attendance across all four After School Care clubs through improved marketing and outreach to lone carer families.

- Maintaining and developing the new fee structure introduced in January 2026, with a view to standardising all families onto the revised payment model.

- Developing the Holiday Club offer and increasing uptake, including during Easter and Summer school holiday periods.

- Actively seeking grant funding and other income to supplement fee income and reduce the organisation's structural deficit.

- Reviewing pay and conditions for staff, ensuring that Gingerbread continues to attract and retain qualified childcare professionals.

- Continuing to monitor the reserves position in accordance with the Board's agreed policy.

- Continuing to liaise with Social Work and other statutory bodies to support families who need our services.

- Providing continued in-house training opportunities for all staff and volunteers, including in child protection, first aid, and reflective practice.

- Maintaining and improving the quality of the physical environment across all club settings.

Our principal funding sources continue to be carers' fees and support from Capability Scotland. We are grateful for the continued support of the City of Edinburgh Council, Capability Scotland, our families, and our staff.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT
Governing document
Gingerbread Edinburgh & Lothian Project is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Memorandum & Articles of Association. It became a registered charity in July 1990 and registered as a company limited by guarantee in June 1990.

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees
Any potential trustee may note their interest in joining the Board, or may be put forward for co-option at an Annual General Meeting or at any other time during the financial year. Trustees who are interested in joining usually have a specific interest in the work of the Project, whether that be employment issues, fundraising, childcare, or any other aspect of the support Gingerbread provides to lone carer families.

All trustees who served during the year ended 31 March 2025, up to the date of signing these accounts, are listed in the Reference and Administrative Details section below.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Organisational structure

During the year ended 31 March 2025, the Board oversaw a period of significant change in the organisation's management structure. Seán Curran, who had been assisting with day-to-day management following the death of long-serving Chief Executive Carole-Anne Parker in February 2023, resigned from the Board on 24 July 2024.

Frances Nothard resigned on 26 October 2024. Following this period of transition, a Finance and Business Manager was appointed in May 2025 to provide financial oversight and operational support to the Director. The current Board consists of Alisha Harper and Timothy Rogerson. The Board is committed to recruiting additional trustees in due course to strengthen governance capacity.

Induction and training of new trustees

The organisation endeavours to provide induction and training for trustees as needed, and any relevant training opportunities are signposted from individual employers and external bodies. In-house training is available to all trustees.

Risk management

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed, and to ensure that appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error. This is reviewed on a regular basis. The principal risks identified during the year under review included financial sustainability, staff recruitment and retention, and the need to maintain satisfactory levels of occupancy across the clubs. Steps taken to address these risks are described in the Financial Review section of this report.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Company number

SC125546 (Scotland)

Registered Charity number

SC016130

Registered office

Saltire Studio
3-5 Saltire Street
Edinburgh
EH5 1QS

Trustees

Sean Curran (resigned 24.7.24)
Helen Siddons (resigned 10.5.24)
Juliet Catriona Louise Barker (appointed 24.8.24)
Alisha Harper
Timothy John Rogerson (appointed 24.8.24)
Frances Nothard (resigned 26.10.24)

Independent Examiner

Mathew RJ Gillies LLB (Hons) ACPA FCIE
Cowan & Partners Limited
60 Constitution Street
Edinburgh
EH6 6RR

Bankers

Bank of Scotland
20/22 Shandwick Place
Edinburgh
EH2 4RN

Approved by order of the board of trustees on .... 29/04/2026................. and signed on its behalf by:

Alisha Harper

....

Alisha Harper - Trustee

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
Gingerbread Edinburgh and Lothian
Project Ltd

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 set out on pages eight to sixteen.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner
The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). The charity's trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1)(a) to (c) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under Section 44(1)(c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of the independent examiner's report
My examination was carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement
In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention :

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44(1)(a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with Regulation 8 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Mathew RJ Gillies LLB (Hons) ACPA FCIE
Full member of the Association of Charity Independent Examiners

Cowan & Partners Limited
60 Constitution Street
Edinburgh
EH6 6RR

30 April 2026

Gingerbread Edinburgh and Lothian
Project Ltd

Statement of Financial Activities
(Incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account)
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	31.3.25 Total funds £	31.3.24 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	5,569	-	5,569	9,059
Charitable activities	3				
Core activities		242,270	-	242,270	256,100
Total		247,839	-	247,839	265,159
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities	4				
Core activities		420,572	-	420,572	304,677
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(172,733)	-	(172,733)	(39,518)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		606,039	-	606,039	645,557
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		433,306	-	433,306	606,039

CONTINUING OPERATIONS
All income and expenditure has arisen from continuing activities.

The Statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

Gingerbread Edinburgh and Lothian
Project Ltd (Registered number: SC125546)

Balance Sheet
31 March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	31.3.25 Total funds £	31.3.24 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	11	5,541	-	5,541	9,112
CURRENT ASSETS					
Cash at bank and in hand		445,312	-	445,312	615,200
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	12	(17,547)	-	(17,547)	(18,273)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		427,765	-	427,765	596,927
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		433,306	-	433,306	606,039
NET ASSETS		433,306	-	433,306	606,039
FUNDS	13				
Unrestricted funds				433,306	606,039
TOTAL FUNDS				433,306	606,039

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for
(a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
(b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on .....29 April 2026..................................... and were signed on its behalf by:

Alisha Harper

....
Alisha Harper - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements
The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The accounts are presented in sterling which is the charity's functional currency, and rounded to the nearest pound.

No changes have been made to the basis of preparing the financial statements this year or to the previous year's financial statements.

Going concern
The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern, with reserves held in line with the policy as per page 4 of the accounts, and therefore the accounts are prepared on a going concern basis.

Critical accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty
The preparation of the financial statements conforms with the requirements of the Charities SORP and general accepted accounting principles. The only area in which it is considered that accounting estimates and areas of judgement have been applied is depreciation, the policy on which is outlined below.

Income
All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure
Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Tangible fixed assets
Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Fixtures and fittings	- 15% on reducing balance
Computer equipment	- 33% on cost

The policy is to capitalise assets where they have an expected useful life of over one year.

Taxation
The charity is an entity whose activities fall under the exemption from corporation tax.

Fund accounting
Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

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1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Hire purchase and leasing commitments

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the period of the lease.

Measurement of debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net or any trade discounts due.

Cash at bank and on hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and any short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

Creditors and loans

Creditors and loans 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 loans are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

VAT

Gingerbread Edinburgh & Lothians Project Limited is not VAT registered and therefore all expenses are recognised gross of VAT.

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	£	£
Grants	5,569	9,059

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	£	£
City of Edinburgh Council	5,569	9,059

3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

		31.3.25	31.3.24
	Activity	£	£
After school clubs	Core activities	242,270	256,100

continued...

4. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs (see note 5)	Support costs (see note 6)	Totals
	£	£	£
Core activities	417,572	3,000	420,572

5. DIRECT COSTS OF CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	£	£
Staff costs	358,121	252,658
Hire of plant and machinery	1,616	1,796
Rates and water	910	-
Insurance	705	1,008
Light and heat	1,016	1,822
Telephone	3,268	3,953
Office expenses	10,891	6,703
Sundries	121	1,892
Toys & equipment	11,980	4,231
Travelling & Parking	82	-
Care commission charges	393	672
Repairs and renewals	3,745	7,537
Food & snacks	1,987	1,117
Volunteers expenses & projects	45	-
College & training fees	4,899	350
Outings and fundraising	1,345	5,755
Badges & uniforms	-	70
Professional fees	10,724	4,611
Staff expenses	2,152	4,933
Depreciation	3,572	2,569
	417,572	301,677

6. SUPPORT COSTS

	Governance costs
	£
Core activities	3,000

continued...

6. SUPPORT COSTS - continued

Support costs, included in the above, are as follows:

	31.3.25 Core activities £	31.3.24 Total activities £
Accountancy fees	3,000	3,000

7. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
Depreciation - owned assets	3,571	3,065
Hire of plant and machinery	1,616	1,796

8. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2025 nor for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Trustees' expenses

Travel and subsistence costs of £nil were reimbursed to a trustee in the year ended 31 March 2025 (2024: £1,372.78).

9. STAFF COSTS

	31.3.25 £	31.3.24 £
Wages and salaries	358,121	252,658
	358,121	252,658

Wages figure includes employer's NI and employer's pension costs, as well as costs of emergency cover provided by external organisations.

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	31.3.25	31.3.24
Average monthly employees	17	17

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

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10. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	9,059	-	9,059
Charitable activities			
Core activities	256,100	-	256,100
Total	265,159	-	265,159
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Core activities	304,677	-	304,677
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	(39,518)	-	(39,518)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	645,557	-	645,557
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	606,039	-	606,039

11. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025	17,971	11,686	29,657
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 April 2024	15,158	5,387	20,545
Charge for year	422	3,149	3,571
At 31 March 2025	15,580	8,536	24,116
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 March 2025	2,391	3,150	5,541
At 31 March 2024	2,813	6,299	9,112

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12. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.25	31.3.24
	£	£
Social security and other taxes	2,730	-
Other creditors	2,191	1,298
Accrued expenses	12,626	16,975
	17,547	18,273

13. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.24	Net movement in funds	At 31.3.25
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	606,039	(172,733)	433,306
TOTAL FUNDS	606,039	(172,733)	433,306

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Movement in funds
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	247,839	(420,572)	(172,733)
TOTAL FUNDS	247,839	(420,572)	(172,733)

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.23	Net movement in funds	At 31.3.24
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	645,557	(39,518)	606,039
TOTAL FUNDS	645,557	(39,518)	606,039

continued...

13. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	265,159	(304,677)	(39,518)
TOTAL FUNDS	265,159	(304,677)	(39,518)

14. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2025 nor the year ended 31 March 2024.

15. PREMISES

The premises are leased from Edinburgh City Council. The lease terms are £1 per annum on an annual rolling basis. It is anticipated that the lease will be ongoing due to the support from Edinburgh City Council for the project.