

STRANGE FIELD

Trustees' Annual Report Year ended 31 December 2025

Strange Field SCIO · Scottish Charity Number SC052132
105–109 French Street, Glasgow G40 4EH

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1. Reference and administrative details

Charity name	Strange Field SCIO
Scottish charity number	SC052132
Date registered	1 November 2022
Principal office	105–109 French Street, Glasgow G40 4EH
Governing document	SCIO constitution
Financial year	1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025
Co-founder and Director (staff team)	Verity Hocking
Financial administrator	Moir Thomson
Accountant	Allan Hunter, AH Accounting Services

Trustees who served during the year

- She Kei Wan
- Steven Grainger (resigned 28 February 2026)
- Helen Moore
- Becca Clarke

Since the year end, Blair Wallace was appointed as a trustee on 1 March 2026. We thank Steven for his time on the board and welcome Blair.

2. Structure, governance and management

Strange Field is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). Our trustees are responsible for the charity. They set its direction, agree its policies, check that we are doing what we said we would do, and make sure our money is used properly. Our staff team runs the day-to-day work.

How trustees are appointed

Our constitution allows between 3 and 7 charity trustees. The board can appoint up to six trustees at any time, by majority vote at a board meeting. The seventh place is for the Director: the board must appoint the person who holds the post of Director as a charity trustee, and they remain a trustee for as long as they hold that post.

At each AGM, any trustees appointed since the previous AGM, and one third of the remaining trustees (those longest in office), retire. They can be re-appointed at the next board meeting, and are treated as re-elected unless they choose not to stand or the board votes against their re-appointment.

The trustees elect a chair, a treasurer and a secretary from among themselves each year. No trustee may be paid for being a trustee, and apart from the Director no trustee may be employed by the charity. The Director may be paid as an employee, but cannot vote on anything connected with their own pay or terms of employment. The members of the SCIO are its charity trustees.

Verity Hocking, our co-founder and Director, is part of our staff team.

How we make decisions

Since we began in 2011 we have worked as a non-hierarchical, artist-led organisation. Until December 2025 we used Policy Governance, sometimes called the Carver model. Under this model the trustees set out what the organisation exists to achieve (our "Ends") and the limits the team works within, and the team reports back against these.

In 2025 our team more than doubled. We reviewed how we work and agreed we needed clearer roles and clearer ways of making decisions, without giving up shared power. In December 2025 we adopted sociocracy. Decisions are now made in small groups called circles, each responsible for one area of work. Decisions are made by consent: a proposal goes ahead unless someone has a reasoned objection.

We chose sociocracy because it suits a neurodivergent team. It makes responsibilities and expectations explicit, and it stops decisions from depending on any one person.

Pay

We have a flat pay rate. Everyone we employ is paid the same hourly rate, whatever their role. When we can afford to raise pay, it goes up for everyone at the same time. Artists are paid at Scottish Artists Union rates or above.

Our team

Nine people joined our team in 2025:

- Kate Shatalow, Marketing and Programme Coordinator (from January)
- Cora Weiss, Studio Coordinator (from April)
- Bobbie (Roberta) Hook, Hire and Events Manager (from May)
- Coral Brookes, Learning Programme Co-Director (from May)
- Eden Bo Dower, Curator in Residence (from May)
- Beth Dynowski, Learning Programme Co-Director (from July)
- Kaih Endelman Music, Strange Exchange Programme Developer (from July)
- Ezra Bernnico, Programme Developer (from August)
- Saffa Kahn, Workshop Assistant (from November)

Zoeli Winters, our Studio Coordinator since 2023, left in May 2025. We thank Zoeli for her work with our studio community.

3. Objectives and activities

Our charitable purposes

Strange Field provides space, facilities and support for contemporary art practice, education, enquiry, and research for the benefit of our local communities (G31 & G40) and anyone's individual or collective arts practice and in the interest of social welfare for recreation and creative education so that their conditions of life, wellbeing and opportunities be improved.

Our vision

Our vision is for accessible creative platforms to be embedded across Glasgow, at the heart of communities, as catalysts for creative development, education, experimentation, inclusion and wellbeing.

What we do

We run creative spaces in Glasgow's East End. Our main venue is 105–109 French Street in Dalmarnock, where we have artist studios, an exhibition and events space, and rooms for workshops and hire. We are a founding member of Friends of The Pipe Factory, which owns The Pipe Factory in Calton. The building is closed for a major refurbishment. In 2025 we also began using a small space at 62 Moncur Street for workshops and participatory activity.

Across these spaces we:

- commission and show contemporary art, with a focus on under-represented and early-career artists
- run free and low-cost workshops and learning for local people of all ages
- provide affordable studios and space hire, with reduced or free rates for people living in G31 and G40
- host music, performance and events, many of them through open calls
- share what we learn about running community-owned cultural spaces, so that others can use it

Public benefit

The trustees have considered OSCR's guidance on public benefit. Most of the East End sits within the 15% most deprived areas in Scotland, and people here face real barriers to taking part in the arts. Our workshops are free, our open calls are open to anyone, and people in G31 and G40 get reduced or free rates. Most of our trustees and staff live or work in the area, which keeps our work grounded in what local people tell us they need.

Our strategic priorities

During 2025 we reviewed our strategic priorities with the team and trustees. We started working on the revised and expanded priorities in 2026. They begin from one principle: lived experience is our methodology, not our subject matter. Those denied institutional access are the experts who decide what gets made, preserved and governed.

1. **Advance contemporary art by centering diverse artists.** We resource artists who push the boundaries of contemporary art, particularly those excluded from or underserved by mainstream arts infrastructure, and build the conditions for genuine experimentation.
2. **Build and operate community-owned cultural infrastructure in Glasgow's East End.** We work towards permanent ownership through democratic structures that are accountable to our communities, and we document our legal, financial and organisational models so others can do the same.
3. **Refuse extractive models and practise reproducible alternatives.** We practise sociocracy, flat pay and anti-extractive curation, and we share our methods openly. Any role with defined professional tasks is always paid.
4. **Centre arts education and creative learning as a radical and rigorous practice.** Through Strange Exchange, our library and community learning space, we collect and share knowledge about arts education freely.

4. Achievements and performance

2025 in numbers

98 events and exhibitions	248 days of public activity	3,461 recorded visitors and participants	295 artists supported	71 creative freelancers paid
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58 events took place at French Street, 29 were part of The Pipe Factory's engagement programme while the building is closed, and 7 took place off-site. Workshops also ran at 62 Moncur Street. We also supported 15 volunteers and assistants.

Our programme included 47 workshops, 17 open-call exhibitions, 9 open-call music events, 8 creative development residencies and rehearsal periods, 5 open-call performance events, and 6 exhibitions and events programmed by Strange Field. Attendance was not recorded at 27 events, so the true number of people who took part is higher than 3,461.

Compared with 2024, counting the same way from our events log, we ran 165% more events (98, up from 37) across 50% more days of public activity (248, up from 165). We ran nearly five times as many workshops (47, up from 10, +370%), and workshop participants rose by 25% (725, up from 581). We supported 45% more artists (295, up from 203). And even though The Pipe Factory was closed, 29 events were part of its programme, up from 11 in 2024 (+164%).

How our programme changed

In 2024 our audience numbers were driven by a small number of large exhibitions, such as Chris Leslie's Dalmarnock exhibition, which drew 600 visitors. In 2025 most of our activity was workshops and ongoing participatory work. We recorded 3,461 people in 2025, compared with 3,865 in 2024, but with 27 events uncounted we believe we reached a similar number or more, through regular, smaller activity rather than a few large events.

This was a deliberate choice. With The Pipe Factory closed, we focused on regular contact with local people, so that the building reopens with a community that is already part of it.

Highlights

- **Skin of the City**, Minty Donald and Nick Millar, part of the Architecture Fringe: 350 visitors.
- **Strange Exchange**, our library and community learning space, built on the idea that knowledge should be shared freely: 297 participants.
- **Twister Factory: An Action Variety Show**: 175 people and 12 artists.
- **Curated Wax x Houseplants Day Party**: 175 people and 4 artists.

The Pipe Factory

The Pipe Factory closed in November 2024 for refurbishment. Construction delays have moved the reopening from spring 2026 to December 2026. In response, an additional engagement budget was secured for the longer closure. This budget is held by Friends of The Pipe Factory, so it does not appear in Strange Field's accounts.

We continue to be Friends of The Pipe Factory's delivery partner for community engagement. Our strategic focus has been on long-term, consistent programming rather than one-off events: regular archive workshops, a monthly writing group, family and community workshops, and open days. 29 of our 2025 events were part of this programme.

This is about trust. We want our relationship with the local community to keep growing throughout the closure, so that the reopening can be a joint celebration between the organisations that brought the building to this stage and the communities it will now serve.

French Street

In 2025 we took on the lease of the whole French Street building and secured a 10-year lease. This doubled the space we can programme for our creative community. It also means we can earn income from venue hire while still keeping space for our own programme. A 10-year lease was a requirement for funders who want to invest in the building, and it keeps our conversations with the landlord about a future purchase open.

We could not have done this without the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. They have been an exceptional funder, working closely with us and giving us the flexibility to pursue our objectives in the way the situation needed.

Our Hire and Events Manager, Bobbie Hook, managed the move into the whole building and substantially grew our hires and sales. Income from trading and hire rose by 149%, from £13,392 in 2024 to £33,410 in 2025, and studio and space rents rose by 40%, from £28,454 to £39,728. In 2025 we provided affordable studios for 14 studio holders. Together, our earned income (£74,991) covered all of our building costs for the year. Demand for space at French Street grew quickly. In 2025, 43 artists, groups and organisations made 54 bookings, up from 17 hirers and 19 bookings in 2024. They ranged from student shows, open-programme exhibitions and club nights to BBC News, a first aid course and in-kind rehearsal space for artists. Counting our own programme and hires together, French Street hosted 21 exhibitions in 2025, up from 10 in 2024, and 12 music nights, up from 9. In 2024 our exhibitions were led by four large funded Strange Field shows. In 2025, without a new programme grant, artists, students and curators filled the space themselves: open-programme exhibitions rose from 6 to 20.

Working towards ownership

Our long-term aim is for French Street to be owned by the community that uses it. In 2023 we reached stage two of the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) with plans to redevelop the building, but the fund was suspended before a decision was made.

When the fund reopened in 2025, we applied again with the full backing of Clyde Gateway. The fund makes clear that projects must be ready to deliver. After discussion with Clyde Gateway, we agreed it made more strategic sense to put the RCGF contribution towards buying the building rather than renovating it. The purchase cost was similar to our estimate for the renovation works. Clyde Gateway discussed this approach with the RCGF, and we went ahead on the understanding that it was acceptable as long as we set out the strategy clearly.

Buying the building would have given us secure tenure and protection from rent increases. Part of the building is let to another tenant, whose rent would cover the running costs, and we would no longer pay rent ourselves. Because the building is already usable, we could then have

fundraised for a phased development from a secure position, and spent the grant with confidence within the timescale the fund requires.

The application was refused because the fund could not support a purchase. After the earlier guidance, this was incredibly frustrating. We are continuing our conversations with the landlord about buying the building, and the 10-year lease gives us time to do this properly.

Partnerships and research

We began working with the University of Glasgow, the University of Dundee and Creative Dundee on questions of cultural ownership: who owns and provides the spaces where culture is made, and how communities can hold on to them. This connects directly to our second strategic priority.

Digital engagement

In 2025 we did not run a major exhibition programme. Our focus was on The Pipe Factory, with more community and open programming, and our website traffic reflects this. Total visits fell to 3,028 (–39.3%) and unique visitors to 1,672 (–41.4%), with page views at 7,825 (–25.5%). The most visited pages were the homepage (2,429 views), Who We Are (947), Hire (693) and What's On (569). Hire being the third most visited page reflects the growth in venue hire at French Street.

The people who did visit engaged more closely. The bounce rate fell to 54% (down 8 percentage points), the lowest across all four years, average time on site held steady at 3 minutes 6 seconds, and returning visitors rose slightly to 4.1%.

Search was our most resilient source of traffic, down just 8.2% to 1,414 sessions and up 118% on 2022. Direct traffic fell 32.8% to 1,261 sessions, but is still up 120% on 2022, which suggests the awareness we built in 2024 has lasted. Social media referrals fell more sharply, as there were fewer event campaigns to drive them: Instagram sessions fell to 61 (–90.8%), Facebook to 52 (–79.7%) and Linktree to 88 (–71.0%).

Our audience kept growing on the channels where people follow us directly. The mailing list grew to 265 subscribers (+41.7%), with 78 new subscribers during the year, and Instagram followers grew to 8,727 (+44.1%). Since the end of 2022, our Instagram following has grown by 329% (from 2,036) and our mailing list by 516% (from 43). Fewer people clicked through from Instagram to the website, which suggests our audience increasingly engages with our work on the platform itself.

What was hard

We experienced the sudden and tragic loss of a key member of the wider team. This was devastating for everyone who worked with them.

It was also a tipping point. In 2024 our focus was mainly on exhibition and performance programming. We grew the programme quickly and secured funding to deliver it, but we did not plan in the same way for the resources and capacity needed to carry that ambition: the systems, processes and operational time that a growing programme depends on.

In 2025 that gap came to a head. Our team more than doubled, we moved into the whole French Street building, and we delivered a larger co-curated community programme. After the loss of our

colleague, their project management work and community work also had to be absorbed by the existing team. The programme was delivered, but it was clear that more operational capacity and clearer procedures would have made a real difference.

We made eight funding applications in 2025 and two were successful. Our largest revenue application, £290,000 to the Glasgow Communities Fund, was unsuccessful, and our RCGF application to buy French Street was refused, as described above.

Underneath this is a challenge we share with much of the sector. Most funding is tied to specific projects: exhibitions, workshops and events. Far less is available for the leadership and operations that make that work possible, or for organisations trying new ways of working. The Paul Hamlyn Foundation is an exception. Their support covers core costs and gives us the flexibility to experiment with how we organise ourselves, and it made much of our 2025 work possible. But one funder cannot cover everything. To run well, an organisation like ours needs about half of its leadership time on delivery and half on operations, and that operational time is still not fully covered. As the team and programme have grown, the work of strategy and operations has become the most important part of the organisation: underpinning clear and consistent processes, and making sure everything can be delivered effectively and with care.

We are looking for more funders who, like Paul Hamlyn, support organisational experimentation and flexibility. That kind of funding lets us hold to our values and reach further with our ambitions, rather than reverting to the traditional, hierarchical structures we are deliberately moving away from.

What helped was the way we work. Because our team is autonomous and non-hierarchical, people could step up in the areas where they were strongest, and the programme kept going. We believe this is a large part of why we delivered so much in such a difficult year.

At the end of the year the whole team agreed that January to March 2026 would be set aside for strategy and operations. The aim is to clear bottlenecks, finish our written procedures, and build clearer structures for a neurodivergent team, so that this work is shared and sustainable, while protecting the wellbeing of our core and wider team. Because of the unsuccessful funding applications, this will be an intensive period for the people working in our operations circles.

5. Financial review

Our accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis. They show the money that came in and went out during the year, and the cash we held at the end of it.

Summary

	2025	2024
Money received	£223,114	£186,687
Money spent	£168,719	£195,877
Surplus / (deficit)	£54,395	(£9,190)
Funds at 31 December	£57,515	£3,120
of which unrestricted	£34,508	(£12,217)
of which restricted	£23,007	£15,337

Where our money came from

Source	2025	Share
Paul Hamlyn Foundation (including core costs)	£142,000	64%
Studio and space rents	£39,728	18%
Trading and hire income	£33,410	15%
Glasgow City Council (voluntary sector wage funding)	£6,123	3%
Event income	£1,853	1%
Total	£223,114	100%

Our income rose by 20%. The biggest change was that the Paul Hamlyn Foundation became our main funder, with an award of £214,218 over three years. This is the first funding we have had that pays for core running costs, not just a single project, and its flexibility is what made it possible for us to take on the whole French Street building. Earned income from rents, hire, trading and events rose by 65%, from £45,587 to £74,991, and now makes up a third of our income, up from a quarter in 2024.

In 2024 we received Creative Scotland (£90,000), National Lottery Heritage Fund (£10,000) and Clyde Gateway (£25,000) grants. We did not receive new grants from these funders in 2025.

Where our money went

Spending	2025	2024
Staff	£74,238	£46,787
Building costs, rent and premises	£62,487	£40,221
Direct programme costs	£12,793	£77,020

Other running costs	£10,464	£17,403
Accounts and administration	£7,439	£4,508
Loan repayments to Strange Field Ltd	£1,298	£9,938
Total	£168,719	£195,877

Staff costs rose because our team grew. Building costs rose because we took on the lease of the whole French Street building. Direct programme costs fell sharply. In 2024 we spent most of our Creative Scotland programme grant on artist fees, equipment and events. In 2025 we had no new programme grant of that kind, and much of our engagement activity was paid for through the Pipe Factory engagement budget, which is held by Friends of The Pipe Factory rather than by us.

The surplus

We ended 2025 with a surplus of £54,395 (£46,725 unrestricted and £7,670 restricted). This needs to be read with care. We received two Paul Hamlyn Foundation payments in 2025, totalling £142,000.

Setting that payment aside, our unrestricted spending in 2025 was about £24,000 more than our unrestricted income.

So the surplus is a matter of timing. It does not mean our core costs are covered. As set out in Section 4, our strategy and operations work is still not fully funded.

Reserves policy

The trustees aim to hold unrestricted reserves equal to three months of core running costs. We expect our costs to keep rising over the next three to five years as we take on more responsibility for the buildings we work in. To keep this growth sustainable, our financial planning is based on three principles:

- **Operational health:** budgeting for realistic staffing, so we do not rely on unpaid work or burn people out.
- **Quality of delivery:** securing and delivering high-quality contemporary art, which means paying proper artist fees and production costs.
- **Incremental growth:** matching our ambitions to the income we actually have.

Reserves at the year end

At 31 December 2025 we held £34,508 in unrestricted funds, compared with a deficit of £12,217 at the end of 2024. However, this balance includes Paul Hamlyn Foundation money intended for 2026. Once that is set aside, we do not yet hold free reserves. Building them, mainly through earned income at French Street, remains a priority for the trustees.

We also held £23,007 in restricted funds, which can only be spent on the purposes they were given for.

Going concern

The trustees are satisfied that the charity is a going concern. We start 2026 on a firm footing: a multi-year commitment from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, a 10-year lease on French Street, earned income that grew by 65% in 2025, and cash in hand to cover our 2026 commitments.

Our focus for 2026 is to turn this into long-term stability by broadening our funding base, building free reserves, and securing funding for our strategy and operations work.

6. Plans for 2026

Our aim for French Street brings three strands together. If we can secure programme funding to keep our main exhibition programme going, the extra space means hires can keep growing steadily alongside it, and the music and training project would add a third strand. Together, these would make French Street a unique, ambitious and experimental contemporary multi-arts venue in Glasgow's East End: a place for our own programme, for the wider creative community, and for young people starting out in music and events, with earned income helping to sustain the work.

- **Strategy and operations (January to March).** Clear bottlenecks, finish our written procedures, and build clearer structures for our team.
- **Find more funders who back how we work.** Build on the example of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation by seeking funders who support organisational experimentation and flexibility, so that our strategy and operations work is properly covered. Applications to Garfield Weston Foundation, Glasgow City Council's Social Innovation Fund and others are in progress.
- **Prepare for The Pipe Factory reopening in December 2026.** Continue our long-term engagement programme as delivery partner for Friends of The Pipe Factory, and work towards a joint opening celebration with the organisations and communities involved.
- **Secure programme funding for our exhibition programme.** Our 2024 exhibition programme was funded by Creative Scotland. We are seeking funding to continue a main Strange Field exhibition programme alongside the growing open programme.
- **Make full use of French Street.** Build on Bobbie Hook's work to grow hire income across the expanded building. Interest in and demand for music events at French Street have grown steadily. We have submitted an expression of interest to Glasgow City Council's Social Innovation Fund, and are preparing a full application, to support this growth and develop music at French Street as a new source of income. Building on the success of, and feedback from, our youth-led music events, the project would also offer training in music and event production for young people aged 18 to 30.
- **Work to our new strategic priorities,** and settle into sociocracy.
- **Keep working towards community ownership of French Street.** Continue our conversations with the landlord and look for funding that can support a purchase, now that the RCGF cannot.
- **Continue our research partnerships** with the University of Glasgow, the University of Dundee and Creative Dundee, and grow Strange Exchange.

7. Principal risks and uncertainties

The trustees review the main risks to the charity regularly. The most significant are:

- **Capacity for strategy and operations.** As we have grown, our processes have not kept pace, and too much knowledge has been held informally. We are addressing this through sociocracy, clearer roles and written procedures, and by seeking funding that covers strategy and operations properly.
- **Reliance on one funder.** The Paul Hamlyn Foundation provided 64% of our 2025 income, and its grant runs until 2027. We are growing earned income and looking for more funders who, like Paul Hamlyn, support flexible and experimental ways of working.
- **The Pipe Factory timetable.** Further construction delays would extend the closure. The engagement budget held by Friends of The Pipe Factory, and our work at French Street and Moncur Street keep us active in the meantime.
- **Team capacity and wellbeing.** 2025 was a challenging time for our team. Q1 2026 has been set aside partly to make workloads sustainable and for relationships to develop.
- **Long-term security of French Street.** The 10-year lease gives us security, but we do not yet own the building, and the RCGF cannot fund a purchase. We are continuing talks with the landlord and looking for other routes to ownership.

8. Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing a trustees' annual report and accounts in line with the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). As the charity's gross income is below £250,000, the trustees have chosen to prepare accounts on a receipts and payments basis, as the Regulations allow.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, for safeguarding the charity's assets, and for taking reasonable steps to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities.

Approval

This report was approved by the trustees on 30/09/2026 and signed on their behalf by:

Signature:  _____

Name: She Kei Wan

Position: Trustee

Date: 02/10/2026