

THE WORDSWORTH CONFERENCE FOUNDATION

Company Number: 6556368
Date of Incorporation: 5 April 2008
Registered Charity Number: 1124319
Date of Registration: 3 June 2008

TRUSTEES' REPORT 2019-2020

1. Reference and Administrative Details

ADDRESS OF THE PRINCIPAL OFFICE:

**2 The Grove,
North End,
Durham,
DH14LU**

REGISTERED OFFICE: Clint Mill, Cornmarket, Penrith CA11 7HW.

TRUSTEES / OFFICERS: Professor Simon Bainbridge; ; Professor Stephen Gill; Professor Bruce Graver; Dr. Elsa Hammond; Dr. Erica McAlpine; Dr. Patty O'Boyle (Treasurer); Dr. Thomas Owens; Professor Nicholas Roe (Acting Chair and Summer Conference Director); Dr. Paige Tovey (IT adviser). Irm Hollenbach: Administrator; Ruth Morris: Secretary to the Board; Inês Rosa: Postgraduate Representative.

2. Structure, Governance and Management

2.1 Structure: The Foundation is a Company Limited by Guarantee, governed by a Memorandum and Articles adopted on 22 February 2008. The Articles provide for a Board of not less than five and not more than twelve Trustees, including up to two individuals co-opted by the Board by reason of their relevant expertise.

2.2 Governance: At the eleventh AGM in August there were no trustees scheduled to stand down for re-election. In 2020 there will be three:

Prof. Simon Bainbridge
Dr. Elsa Hammond
Dr. Thomas Owens

2.3 Management: The Board meets at least twice a year, and the quorum necessary for the transaction of the business of the Board is two. The positions of Summer Conference Director, Winter School Director/s and Treasurer are held by Trustees. In the event of a Summer Conference or Winter School Director reaching the end of his or her term of Trusteeship the person would, at the discretion of the Board, continue to hold that post (as an Appointee) until re-elected. Nicholas Roe continued as Acting Chair as the Board was unable to meet in August 2020, when the role was up for review. To facilitate planning for future activity during the pandemic, at the Board meeting in October 2020 Nick volunteered

to continue as Acting Chair until the Board can meet together. All trustees gratefully accepted this offer.

2.4 Risks: The Trustees have reviewed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, particularly as concerns the Covid pandemic.

3. 2019-20 Financial Review

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3.3 The purpose of the **Reserve Fund** is

(a) to ensure that the Foundation would have the ability to continue its operations in the event that a cancelled or unprofitable conference were to exhaust the Operating Fund and

(b) to contribute to Bursary Income.

The cash portion of the Reserve Fund (accumulated life subscriptions) was transferred from the Charities Aid Foundation to the United Trust Bank in June 2014. A further tranche of the Reserve Fund is now invested in the Charities Investment Fund operated by CCLA Investment Management Limited. The Reserve Fund stood at **£11,030.17** on deposit with the United Trust Bank and **£10,675.83** in the Charities Investment Fund, making a total of **£21,706.00** on 31 March 2020.

3.4 The **Operating Fund** for any given financial year is defined as the total cash in the Foundation's three HSBC accounts – one devoted to the Summer Conference (and General Administration, one to the Winter School, and the other to the Bursary Fund – less Reserved sums (recent life subscriptions or funds reserved for bursaries). It is intended that the Operating Fund should be in credit by between £7,000 and £10,000 at the end of each financial year. On 31 March 2020 the Operating Fund stood at **£18,360.00**

3.5 The Foundation's deposit account (designated the **Bursary Fund**) holds all donations, auction proceeds, dividends from the Charities Investment Fund, and any sums from the operating fund deemed surplus to requirements. It may also hold life subscriptions pending transfer to the Reserve Fund. On 31 March 2020 the Bursary Fund stood at **£11,562. 59**

3.6 The **Endowment** Fund supports the award of Bursaries and presently consists of a legacy of £43,000 from the estate of the late Ena Wordsworth. The legacy is invested in the Charities Investment Fund operated by CCLA Investment Management Limited and was valued at **£61,809.89** on 31 March 2020.

3.7 On 31st March 2020 due to the volatility of the stock exchange because of the Covid Pandemic, the funds from Richard Grivil's recent bequest of £50,000.00 were still in the main account, though designated as restricted funds, so that the balance in the main HSBC account was then £53,557.33.

4. Objectives and Activities:

4.1 The principal objectives of the Company are:

- (a) to advance the education of the public in relation to the life work and influence of William Wordsworth (1770–1850) and his circle;
- (b) to advance public knowledge, benefit, and enjoyment of the literature and culture of the Romantic Period (1750–1850).

4.2 Its main activities are:

- (a) to hold conferences, winter schools and courses either alone or with others;
- (b) to make grants to enable students to attend and so benefit from such conferences.

4.3 It is also empowered

- (c) to accept a transfer of any property, assets, undertaking, functions, responsibilities and liabilities conducive to the realization of the Objects;
- (d) to accept any subscriptions, gifts, devises and bequests of any real or personal estate whether subject to special trusts or not;
- (e) to establish subscription arrangements and take other steps to procuring funds for the Company;
- (f) to invest in such investments, securities or property as may be thought fit, and
- (g) to set aside funds for special purposes or against future expenditure or liabilities.

5. Achievements and Performance in 2019–2020

5.1 The 2020 Wordsworth Winter School.

Stephen Gill writes:

The Winter School took place at Rydal Hall over 17th -22nd February 2020. There were 33 full-time attendees with others as occasional visitors and guests. The theme for the week was 'Wordsworth's Variety'. The School opened with an evening of tributes to Richard Grivil. In the following days there were lectures by Peter Dale, Elizabeth Scheer, Heather Glen, Cecilia Powell, David Chandler, Helen Boyles, Christopher Simons, Jessica Fay and Oliver Clarkson. The weather was terrible. It poured with rain for the whole week, save for one afternoon, but walks and excursions to Cartmel, Brantwood and Cockermouth were nonetheless very enjoyable. Conditions at Rydal Hall were, regrettably, unsatisfactory in some aspects, most notably that most of the rooms were without hot water for the whole week. The School benefitted enormously from the efficiency and unfailing good spirits of Irm Hollenbach.

5.2 The 2020 Wordsworth Summer Conference was cancelled due to the Covid pandemic. Rydal Hall now has safety protocols in place for guests staying and events, but in the immediate future these will mean that the event cannot take place in its previous form. The social aspects of meals and the excursions would be particularly affected. Rydal Hall is however confident that it can hold a summer conference in 2021 if WCF can put one on, and at its October meeting the Board agreed to keep the possibility open until into the new year. Ten of the speakers lined up for 2020 are apparently willing to contribute in 2021. It was agreed to keep the option of the Summer Conference open until January 2021 and correspondence with those who attended in the past has established that a good number will be prepared to travel and attend. A final decision will be needed by February, with planning limited to what could be easily cancelled if the pandemic still made it impossible to run. The Board has discussed the possibility of access internationally via video conferencing although a more compact conference format may be required if this option was developed. Charging would have to be designed to allow different levels of involvement and might provide opportunities to broaden the numbers of people involved.

5.3 Although activities have been severely limited this year, the Foundation continues its reciprocal arrangements with the Wordsworth Trust. It is hoped that, as in the past, the facilities of the Trust at Dove Cottage and the Museum will be open for the benefit of future conference participants, and Wordsworth Trust staff and volunteers will have free access to conference lectures and papers. The assistance and participation especially of Michael MacGregor (Director) and Jeff Cowton (Curator of the Trust Collections) are always greatly appreciated.

6. Public Benefit

Public benefit is integral to the charity's objectives in the following respects:

(a) The conferences operated by the Foundation are designed to appeal to a wider public than merely academic conferences, and local attendance on an occasional, non-residential basis, without payment of the registration fee, is encouraged;

(b) As in previous years the residential cost of both conferences has been minimized, so as to make them accessible to students and to pensioners, providing some residential places at less than cost. In the interest of economy, part of each conference's transport requirements is provided by economical hire of a minibus from North Cumbria Community Transport (with Trustees as registered drivers).

(c) In 2019-2020 the Foundation applied funds to providing eleven bursaries at the 2019 Summer Conference:

SUMMER BURSARIES 2019

Ena Wordsworth Bursaries

Nick Dodd (University of Leeds)

Diptishree Gupta (Loreto College, Kolkata)

Heather Hannaford (University of Florida)

Ben Norbury (Queen's College Oxford)

Richard Wordsworth Bursaries

Thomas Casalaspì (Harvard University)
 Jonathan Gonzalez (University of La Rioja)
 Tara Lee (Oxford University)
 Daniel Norman (Durham University)
 Jake Phipps (Durham University)

Jonathan Wordsworth Bursaries

Brandon Wernette (Tufts University)

William Knight Bursaries

Lewis Todd (Cambridge University)

(d) A book auction at the Summer Conference raised £850 for bursaries. Together with dividend income and interest received during the year (see section 7 below), approximately **£11562.59** was reserved for bursaries in 2020. The sum could be increased by drawing on the Foundation's Operating Fund.

(e) The purpose of the bursary scheme is to enable people with limited resources, not necessarily in full-time formal education, and without regard to background or origin, to attend the conference at less than half the real cost.

(f) All donations are applied, without deduction, to the benefit of members of the public. No Trustee is remunerated, only the unpaid Conference Directors attend conferences without payment of fees. Administration of the events is outsourced at an agreed rate, and there is no paid staff.

As is shown by the above, the charity extends the benefits of attending conferences irrespective of participants' race, geographical location, sexual orientation, age, or economic circumstance. Both the bursary scheme, and arrangements for local admission are designed to enable people to benefit from the work of the Charity without regard to economic circumstances.

7. The Bursary Fund

Brought forward, 1 April 2019	5426.46
Auction Receipts (inc. book sale)	850.00
Surplus transferred in	4000.00
Account income.	15.15
Donations	410.00
Investment Income	2430.57
Disbursed	-1569.59
Carried Forward, 31 March 2020	£11562.59

8. Members & Friends

8.1 The Wordsworth Conference Foundation has a democratic structure. Its Trustees may be nominated by Members as well as by the Board, and are elected by its Members. Their consecutive periods of service are limited to two terms of three years. Those who support the objects of the Charity can become either a Member or a Friend, on payment of the same life subscription.

8.2 Becoming a Member is a legal step, which involves signing the Memorandum and Articles of the Company, being elected to membership by the Board, and adopting a £10 share of the company's limited liability to the public. Members are entitled to attend and vote at annual general meetings, which take place during each Summer Conference. Members receive an annual report and financial statement and the agenda and minutes of the Annual General Meeting, and participate in the election of Trustees. Friends of the Foundation do not have voting rights (though they may be elected as Trustees and thereby become Members; and they may attend AGMs as observers). Nor do they incur any obligations.

8.3 Both Members and Friends pay a lifetime subscription of £295 and are entitled to the same 10% discount on conference fees (i.e. the registration fee) at the Summer Conference and Winter School for fifteen years (anyone attending both events each year would recoup their subscription in seven years at current rates). Members and Friends are entitled to receive advance notice of forthcoming conferences, at their email or postal address (email being preferred).

8.4 There are currently 20 Life Members and 17 Friends.