Conwy Arts Trust Annual Report 2025/26

Charity Number: 1161120

1. Executive Summary

2025/26 has been another busy year with for Conwy Arts Trust, with a multitude of Arts activities and events, and, as always, we are extremely grateful to the many people who have donated money to us. This has enabled engagement activities to continue at this time, especially as attracting funding becomes more difficult as Grant Providers respond to economic pressures.

In order to maximise impact the charity has worked closely with Venue Cymru and the Conwy County Borough Council Culture Team. Our projects have been funded by a mixture of donations and grants and our key areas of work in this financial year were:

- take pART 2026 at Venue Cymru (January 2026)
- Python on the Prom
- Thomas Howell Education Fund
- Sing Yoga / Lego
- Small Grants Fund

It is timely, and appropriate, to thank everyone for their continued support for Conwy Arts Trust.

Diolch yn fawr iawn am ein cefnogi dros y flwyddyn diwethaf.
Edrychwn ymlaen at eich cefnogaeth dros y flwyddyn i ddod.

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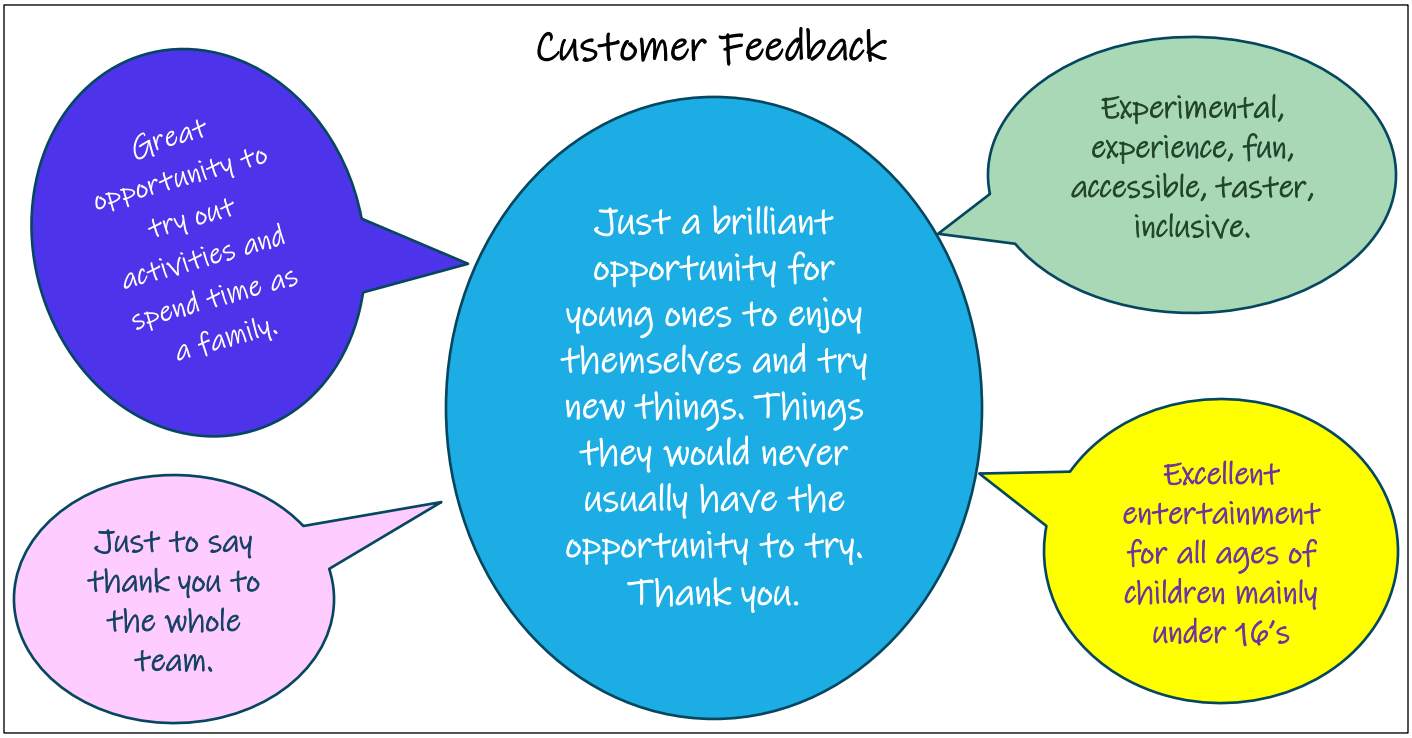
2. take pART 2026

The huge arts, literature and science festival returned to Venue Cymru this winter, funded by Conwy Arts Trust through Arts Council of Wales, and held over the weekend of 11-12 January.

10,000 children, young people and adults took part in 108 workshops, ranging from model-making with Aardman Animation, to Jedi Knight training classes, Medieval print making and technical theatre lighting. BBC Wales and S4C brought the shows Rownd a Rownd, Stwnsh, Deiain a Loli and Sioe Cyw and take pART Patron, Harry Potter book illustrator Jonny Duddle, led his incredibly popular draw-along sessions.



As in previous years, take pART offered children and young people the opportunity to have a go at so many different arts, science and literature activities, which they may not be able to engage with otherwise.

3. A Python On The Prom

Terry Jones Statue: From the artist's studio to the final unveiling

After an overwhelming response from donors fans and local supporters it was agreed, with the help of Terry's family and Python's themselves, that Terry Jones should be represented as his famous character, the Nude Organist.

Artist Nick Elphick captured Terry's likeness perfectly before creating a hybrid of Terry's desk and the eponymous organ, covered in lots of references to the life and career of Terry, from his children's stories to his early days in Oxford, to his love for Samuel Pepys, all being carried off on Pythonesque legs.

1 NIck Elphick - Sculptor (right). Image by Paul Cooper

Nick then worked closely with the Lost Foundry in Axminster on the process of breaking down his life size model into smaller pieces, moulding each piece in ceramic, casting them in molten metal, then welded them all back together to finally recreate his design in bronze.

Sally Jones, Terry's daughter, joined Nick at the foundry in Devon to watch the metal pour as well as returning later in the process when the final bronze was being patinated. Professional Photographer Paul Cooper photographed the whole process from artist studio, to foundry, to unveiling day, at no cost to the campaign as he was a massive Python fan and supporter of Nick's work. An exhibition of these photos was put on display in Colwyn Bay Library in the run up to the event as well as displayed on posters around the town centre.

Saturday 25th April 2026 – the Unveiling Event

The aim of the event was to celebrate Terry Jones and to encourage people from North Wales and around the world to be inspired to follow their own creative journey.

With a donation from Conwy Arts Trust, funding from Arts Council Wales and Bae of Colwyn Town Council an afternoon of activities was launched at midday.

The event saw close collaboration between Theatr Colwyn, Conwy Arts Trust, Venue Cymru and Conwy County Borough Council, who supported the campaign and the event with their substantial expertise and resources for running large scale creative arts-based events.

Importantly this event also presented an opportunity to ensure that all of the activities and events would be run by Welsh creative professionals.

Terry's multifaceted career was used as inspiration, our creative professionals developed unique visitor experiences and specific programmes/activities for the day. Several of the participating groups also ran multiple, similarly bespoke outreach events prior to the unveiling. These were run with local primary schools, a community group and an assisted living group taking part.

The unveiling was a highly successful event with approximately 6-8000 visitors across 4 hours. Approximately 50% of those attending were from outside the local area, and the numbers also include visitors from around the world namely Europe, Japan, USA, Brazil.

CAT Chair Dilwyn opened the show by leading the Côr Alaw Choir in traditional favourite Welsh anthems in suitably Pythonesque style and costume.

2 Dilwyn Price, Chair of Conwy Arts Trust and Choirmaster, leading Côr Alaw Image: Paul Cooper

3 Simon Holland Roberts - The Manageress Image: Paul Cooper

Python fans from far and wide also arrived in elaborate and classic Python costumes. Uniquely, the Promenade was filled with the sounds of classic catchphrases as well as the famous clip clop of coconuts! The main stage at the event was the Python's Spam Cafe carefully recreated and run by local group Pigtown Theatre. Pigtown's own Simon Holland Roberts 'cleverly' disguised himself as Terry's classic Spam Cafe Manageress, who was the masterly MC introducing the guests speakers as well as entertaining the crowds.

It was an honour to welcome special guests, Sir Michael Palin, Terry Gilliam, Suzy Eddie Izzard, Carol Cleveland and Sara Sugarman.

Super fan Suzy Eddie Izzard interviewed Palin, Gilliam and Cleveland, who reminisced about their old friend Terry and the making of so many iconic TV/film moments. Whilst poignant readings were given by Sugarman and Libby Loughland from Magic Light Productions. Image: Paul Cooper

4 Suzy Eddie Izzard interviews Michael Palin, Terry Gilliam and Sara Sugarman - Image: Paul Cooper

There were lots of enthusiastic participants for a very Silly Olympics, with Silly Walks and Gumby Races as well as Wheelbarrow Jousting.

5 Silly Walkers! Image: Paul Cooper

A Viking village was in place on the sand, populated by authentic Viking re-enactors as well as Knights and their squires, all from the Black Crow Historical Society. They gave displays of swordsmanship as well as running battles, often stopping to pose with an ice cream or two on what was a beautiful sunny and very warm day.

Colwyn Bay Library and Llandudno Museum both ran stalls, bringing books and Roman artefacts for visitors to explore. Magic Light Productions ran storytelling and puppet making workshops, the Llandudno and Colwyn Bay Tramway Society brought an original tram, artist Dave Sharp did a live speed painting of Terry, Sol Cinema brought their vintage caravan solar powered cinema to show films from Terry's early days; throughout the day, local Graffiti artist Andy Birch painted a shed with images from Terry's long career, until the shed was eventually blown up to reveal the statue.

6 Suzy, Sarah, Sally, Terry, & Michael blow up the shed
Image: Paul Cooper

The event was the culmination of a campaign to gain funds from fans around the world to raise the statue as a gift to the people of Colwyn Bay. Crowdfunding in this way raised the profile of the statue worldwide and is already encouraging tourism with reported increases in visitors specifically visiting to see the statue. Feedback from local businesses is that people are travelling to Colwyn Bay with the purpose of visiting the statue and spending money locally.

To keep the statue and Colwyn Bay in the public eye since the unveiling, the statue has featured in:

- Prom Xtra – a family day on the Prom which attracts 10-15000 visitors
- A screening of Monty Python's Life of Brian at Theatr Colwyn, with a Q&A session hosted by ITV's Rob Shelly and Sally, Nick.
- A future event is planned at the House of Commons with the support of MP Gill German

7. Admiring Form!

Images: Paul Cooper

4. Thomas Howell Education Fund Grant 2025

Stories from the Archives

A £5,000 education grant was obtained through Thomas Howell which allowed Shirley Williams, Fusion Officer at Conwy County Borough Council, to run **Stories from The Archives** workshops at schools throughout the county. Conwy Archives contains thousands of items including documents, maps and photographs relating to the whole county. Stories from the Archives aims to reach out to schools highlighting heritage stories from the County which are part of the Archive Collection, by using a professional storyteller to deliver sessions to schools.

The aim is to continue to deliver bilingual heritage storytelling sessions to Fusion schools in Conwy based on themes that fit into their own curriculum plans. These are delivered at the schools themselves so as to avoid costly coach costs. Future sessions will focus on stories about Victorian school days, Crime and Punishment, Suffragettes, Upstairs-Downstairs, Conwy Toy Story, a Monk's story and life in Wartime Britain. These have proved extremely popular following the last round of funding we received.

This year approximately 500 children across the County actively took part in the sessions.

Conwy Toy Story -
delivered to 75 pupils at Ysgol Bro Gwydir

World War II Stories

delivered to 162 children from–

Ysgol Ffordd Dyffryn,
Ysgol Bro Cernyw,
Ysgol Bro Aled
Ysgol Glan Morfa,
Ysgol Pencae

- **World War I Stories** were delivered to 129 pupils from Ysgol Elfod
- **Arwyn Monk Story** was delivered to 105 pupils from – Ysgol Cynfran, Ysgol Blessed William Davies
- **Conwy Victorian Schools Story** was delivered to 28 pupils from Ysgol Pencae

5. Sing Yoga

Sing Yoga received a further £800 of grant funding to run extra sessions at Venue Cymru following the success of the sessions held at Theatr Colwyn.

Sing Yoga is an inclusive activity that uniquely combines gentle yoga movement with guided singing. The integration of movement and voice encourages physical awareness while also promoting relaxation and emotional wellbeing.

These sessions are open to all members of the community, regardless of age, experience, or ability. The welcoming format creates a safe and supportive environment where participants can connect, build confidence, and experience shared enjoyment.

In addition to the clear physical and mental health benefits, Sing Yoga actively promotes:

1. **Wellbeing** – reducing stress, enhancing mood, and supporting overall health.
2. **Social inclusion** – providing accessible activities that reduce isolation.
3. **Community connection** – offering opportunities for people to meet, engage, and build relationships.

6. Lego Cafe

Due to the popularity of the sessions, the existing stocks of Lego became depleted and well worn. A grant from CAT allowed the purchase of brand-new Lego helping to accommodate more children and to meet the expectations of creative young minds, whilst continuing to offer an engaging and positive experience for everyone.

Lego-based activities support:

1. **Wellbeing** – encouraging mindfulness, focus, and stress reduction through creative play.
2. **Social inclusion** – bringing together children and families from different backgrounds in a shared space.
3. **Confidence and communication skills** – promoting teamwork.
4. **Community connection** – helping families build friendships and reduce isolation during holiday periods.

The Lego Café provides a safe, welcoming and inclusive space for children and families to come together during school holidays. Offering free creative play opportunities helps reduce financial barriers and ensures all families can participate.

7. Small Grant Fund

Sian Young, Culture Development Officer for Conwy County Borough Council, is providing administration services for this grant scheme.

As a result of the generosity of the public, we have been able to continue our Small Grants fund to support a range of creative arts projects in our communities.

This year, grant awards were given to:

- **Betws y Coed Ukelele Band concert May 2026 –**

  A themed event at the Betws-y-Coed Memorial Hall free of charge to the public
  Aim: to encourage and introduce people to playing the ukelele and to provide opportunities for learners to refine their playing skills and engaging with the public. Some of the members are part of the Goldies singing group who also made an appearance at the event.

- **Mostyn Art Gallery** – Exploring the Welsh language through Riso printing with artist Anna Farrell.
  Aim: to explore ways to strengthen the use and ownership of the Welsh language through creative engagement. The public workshop provided a space for the local community to actively participate in this conversation, fostering a deeper connection with the language. Participation in the Riso print workshop provides hands-on experience in printmaking, learning how to create a two-colour Riso print and an introduction to typography and graphic design principles by developing personal letterform as an A3 print, all conducted through the medium of Welsh.
- **Gwrych Castle –** Artisan Market with entertainment.
  Aim: to host a vertical dance demonstration at their artisan fair. 'Hedydd' company members Lisa Spaull, Angharad Jones and Kseniia Fedorovykh demonstrated Vertical Dance by way of three demonstrations on the castle walls at the Artisan Market held August 31st 2025 they were also joined by youth group member Rosa Spaull.

  The music was pre-recorded, by North Wales singer songwriter Eve Goodman.

Application forms for a Small Grant can be downloaded here Small Grant | Conwy Arts Trust and it is strongly recommended that interested parties discuss their application before submitting by calling Sian on 01492 575572 or e-mailing art@conwy.gov.uk

8. Donations

We are grateful to the many people who have donated to the Charity this year. Income to general donations equated to £9127.09 and to restricted funds, a total of £16140.58 was donated, a summary of which follows:

GENERAL DONATIONS	
General bucket collections /Donations	£2508.90
Annual CAT donations via Box Office	£6618.19
Sub Total	***£9127.09***
RESTRICTED DONATIONS	
Annual CAT donations via Box Office	£6618.19
take pART bucket collections	£85.83
Python on the Prom Project	£9436.56
Sub Total	***£16140.58***
TOTAL	**£25267.67**

The Gift Aid Claim from the donations received in the period 2025-2026 is estimated to be in the region of £1,311.49 and is included in the above figures. The claim for 25.26 is in the process of being claimed and approved by HMRC.

9. Accounts 2025/26

Conwy Arts Trust 31/03/2026

	Restricted Funds	Non Restricted	Totals
Bal b/f	145,188.68	19,773.50	164,962.17
Income	33,986.37	9,127.09	43,113.46
Expenditure	-105,705.65	-£ 5,032.12	-110,737.77
Transfer between funds	1,000.00	-1,000.00	0.00
Bal Avail.	74,469.40	22,868.46	97,337.86

Represented By :-	Bank Bal - as at 31.03.26	76,606.81
24.25 Debtors		2,093.88
24.25 Creditors		500.00
25.26 Creditor invoices		1,789.73
25.26 Sales income from VC		5,095.79
25.26 Gift aid 25-26		1,311.49
25.26 Donations		14,519.62
25.26 Grant		-
	Year End Bal	-97,337.86

RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Creu	Ty Cerdd	Take pART	Small Arts Grant	Clocaenog - Stories from Archives	Thomas Howell Education Fund	VC/TC Restricted	ACW Young Creatives	Create 2	Python on the Prom	Theatr Colwyn Seat Refurb.	Orme Project	Sea Changes	
Bal b/f	747.58	1,725.00	5,916.10	850.00	1,900.00	-	23,339.82	0.00	29.62	106,783.35	300.00	-	-	
Income	-	-	5,066.62	-	-	5,000.00	6,618.19	-	-	9,801.56	-	7,000.00	500.00	
Expenditure	-	-	- 5,916.10	- 1,361.73	- 1,775.00	- 3,200.00	-	-	-	- 85,952.82	-	- 7,000.00	-500.00	
Transfer funds	-	-	-	1,000.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Bal Avail.	747.58	1,725.00	5,066.62	488.27	125.00	1,800.00	29,958.01	0.00	29.62	30,632.09	300.00	-	-	74,469.40

Transfer from Non-restricted to Small Arts Grant

Signature:
Dilwyn Price, Chair Date: 24/08/2026

FINANCIAL REVIEW

In the period under review, the income the Charity received was **£43,113**. The majority of the expenditure was for the take pART project, Small Arts Grant, Stories from the Archives Projects and the Python on the Prom Project which are all restricted funds. The fund brought forward to this year was **£164,962**. Expenditure in the year on specific projects amounted to **£110,73.**

10. Acknowledgements

Conwy Arts Trust would like to thank its volunteer Board Members for their ongoing support. In 2025/26 the following people served as Board Members for the Conwy Arts Trust: Dilwyn Price; Michael Tree; Don Milne; Sarah Ecob; Joann Rae; Kristen Gallagher; Cllr Gwennol Ellis; Gareth Leech and Helen Goddard. Lorraine Whalley was our Minute Taker (non-voting) and Louise Scott Jones was a non-voting member in charge of Accounts.

Thanks to our Patron Rhys Meirion for his support of the charity. We would like to extend our thanks to Conwy County Borough Council and Venue Cymru for administrative, financial and project support throughout the year and to our external auditor, Sandra Forrest.

Finally, huge thanks to everyone who has supported us with financial donations, worked with us on our projects or been one of our many wonderful participants.

Signature:
Mr Dilwyn Price, Chair Date: 24/08/2026