



Original artwork created by Stacey Leigh-Ross (ByLeigh)

Festival Premier Partner: **Johnson Matthey**

# Annual Report 2022

## ROYSTON ARTS FESTIVAL & EVENTS

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## Creative Royston Management Committee (CRMC) 2022

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Mary Antony, Town Council Representative (from May)

Christin Bauer, Marketing & Volunteer Coordinator, Community Liaison (until June)

Ruth Brown, Member

Carl Filby, Chair and Websites Administrator

Fran Foster, Community Liaison (from June)

Marguerite Phillips, Town Council Representative (until May)

Hannah Theobald, Vice-Chair

The Offices of Secretary and Treasurer remained vacant and were covered by the Chair. A special thanks is due to Cath Boughton and The Listing magazine for providing additional help with marketing, through social media in particular.

### Contact details

|        |                    |                                |
|--------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
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|        | Chairperson:       | chair@creativeroyston.org      |
|        | Vice-Chair         | vice-chair@creativeroyston.org |
|        | Secretary:         | secretary@creativeroyston.org  |
|        | Treasurer:         | treasurer@creativeroyston.org  |
|        | Event submissions: | community@creativeroyston.org  |
|        | Marketing:         | marketing@creativeroyston.org  |
|        | Press:             | press@creativeroyston.org      |
|        | Volunteers:        | volunteers@creativeroyston.org |
|        | Website admin:     | webadmin@creativeroyston.org   |

Phone: Festival Helpline: 07907 880 355 (during September only)

Address: Creative Royston, c/o The Town Hall, Melbourn Street, Royston, SG8 7DA

Web: [www.createroyston.org](http://www.createroyston.org) & [www.roystonmusicfest.uk](http://www.roystonmusicfest.uk)

Facebook: /roystonartsfestival

Twitter: @royartsfest

Instagram: @creativeroyston

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## Chairperson's statement

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In 2021 we ran what can only be described as a hybrid festival with some important elements remaining online as they were for the wholly online 2020 festival, owing to the continuing prevalence of Covid. So, 2022 presented the first real opportunity to run what might be described as a 'normal' festival since 2019.

We chose the well-known phrase 'Circle of Life' as our festival theme because we thought it could be interpreted in a variety of ways and of course is highly recognisable in the connection with the Elton John song and 'The Lion King' movie. That was taken up by several participating groups and also formed the basis for our Cover Art Competition for Royston schoolchildren which was run again with the assistance of Royston First Schools and King James Academy. It was also nice to be able to display all the pictures entered by schoolchildren in Royston Library again for the first time since 2019 and Royston Arts Society once again kindly let us use their display boards for this purpose.

Unfortunately, one of our stated aims for 2022, to try to recruit more committee members, proved to be unsuccessful and we had to tailor our ambitions accordingly. Our initial aim for Creative Royston was to put on a Finale Concert and Royston MusicFest, but not a Community Event in Priory Gardens as we have done for the last few pre-pandemic festivals. However, after the submissions from other participating groups had closed at the end of May we received a generous offer from the Limitless Academy of Performing Arts to put on some substantial entertainments in Priory Gardens as part of a Community Event of the type that the festival staged pre-Covid from 2015 to 2019.

Despite some reservations on my part about whether we could cope with the amount of extra work that a Community Event would generate, I decided that it was too good an offer to refuse and it would also take the festival to another level. Unfortunately, that was the start of a period affected by illness and bereavement which put a lot of extra pressure on us to deliver, but despite these setbacks we managed to put on a festival that attracted an estimated 4,552 visits.

That attendance figure compares very favourably with pre-pandemic years which usually averaged around 5,000, especially when our small committee is taken into account, along with the absence of some regular participants and the continuing impact of Covid which has still not disappeared as I write this. Personally, I am very pleased with the outcome and of course very grateful to all those who have contributed to making the festival a success this year including our sponsors. Hopefully, all those groups and/or individuals have been acknowledged at some point in this report but if not that is entirely my unintended omission.

Once again, for the fourth year running we have made this report available in electronic form only as we continue to pursue environmentally-friendly policies and practices wherever possible.

*Carl Filby*

Chairperson, January 2023

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## Volunteers and Contributors

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Creative Royston events could not happen without the hard work of our volunteers and we are always keen to hear from people who would like to help out at events. Just a couple of hours during the festival spent on a ticket desk or stewarding visitors can be a great help. If you're interested or would just like to know more, please email us on [volunteers@creativeroyston.org](mailto:volunteers@creativeroyston.org).

Many thanks to all our volunteers in 2022: Kate Berry, Eleanor Cashman, Liz Cox, Graeme Dargie, Amandeep Dhillon, Sarah Dingley, Nick Filby, Tina Filby, Lucy Forrest, Sukriti Garg, Neeru Gogna-Darroch, Ivana Kisegi, Sumanth Mittapalli, Ray Munden, Phil Oddy, Rijoy Ravindran, Bernie Shaddock, Becky Snook & James Watt,

A special thanks is due to Emma & Joe Daintrey, who very kindly gave up their time and put a lot of effort into providing a professional sound and lighting system for our Finale Concert, and also to photographer Caroline Baker whose photographs have been used to illustrate the programme section in this report.

**Those who participated in the 2022 festival included:** À Fin; BEEE Creative; BlueSky Acoustic Duo; Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthews; Jean Fullerton; Joe Hillman; Kelly & Woolley; Kelvin Davies & Gary Jones; Hunter Muskett Duo; Knuckles & Nails; Karen McWhinnie; staff and pupils of King James Academy Royston; Limitless Academy of Performing Arts; Rotary Club of Royston; Royston Arts Society; Royston Library; Royston Museum; Royston Photographic Society; Royston Picture Palace; Royston Town Band and Development Band; Stacey Leigh-Ross (Mixed-Media Artist), Tin Giants, Thursday's Band; Rhys Wilson and WomenSing.

**Businesses, local authorities, charities and other organisations which contributed financially or in-kind in 2022:** Details of the financial contributions by our sponsors can be found in the supporting statement to our 'Income and Expenditure Account' towards the end of this report but we would like to take this opportunity to thank them along with others who assisted in some form with the 2022 festival. Our Premier Partner, **Johnson Matthey**, were very generous in their support and sponsorship in once again providing a 'no-strings attached' sum which the company has been kindly donating to Creative Royston for some years now and we hope that they will continue to support our efforts as our Premier Partner. We also thank the **Brian Lesley Racher Trust** which has regularly given us great assistance, often supporting MusicFest which it did again this year and kindly extended that support to our Community Event in Priory Gardens. Prior to Covid, **Royston First Bid** regularly contributed each year towards the festival publicity and production of the programme and we are very grateful that they agreed once more to make such a contribution in 2022. **Royston Town Council** has made their rooms available for festival planning meetings and we would like to thank the **Town Council office staff** for their assistance during the year. **Tesco** has contributed the wine for the author talk by Jean Fullerton and allowed us to mount a window display of posters leading up to the festival, as did **Royston Library**.

Finally, thank you also to everyone who contributed to our publicity efforts by putting up posters in their windows, banners on their premises or helping to distribute flyers and sharing posts etc. on social media.

## Creative Royston Competitions



Creative Royston Arts Festival  
Creative Writing Competition 2022

Capture the Arts Festival theme 'Circle of Life' or just find your own inspiration to write up to 500 words

A panel of experienced writers will select a winner in each of the following age groups:

7-10, 11-14, 15-18 and 19+

Winners will each receive book vouchers to the value of £50 from David's Bookshop, Letchworth.

Deadline for entry: Sunday 14th August

Full details, competition rules and entry forms available from [creativeroyston.org](http://creativeroyston.org)

Sponsored by Rotary Club of Royston

One entry per person



We were once again indebted to the Rotary Club of Royston for their support in running a creative writing competition in which they did most of the organising. We were looking for inspiring original short story writing within 3 age groups for young people with a 19+ category to cater for all others.

A limit of 500 words was set again and potential writers were invited to utilise the festival theme of 'Circle of Life' if they wished, though there was no compulsion to do so. Again there was no distinction drawn between fiction and non-fiction.

We were very grateful for the assistance of our expert judges, children's author Catherine Rosevear, and journalist and Rotarian David Blundell.

Thank you to all who entered the competition and David's Bookshops of Letchworth, which converted the prize money put up by the Rotary Club into book vouchers of a higher value.

Category winners for the Creative Writing Competition were:

Age 7 to 10 – **The Rainbow Tree** by Nathen Dineth Tibenderana aged 8

Age 11 to 14 – **My Cat** by Holly Rose Brown aged 13

Age 15 to 18 – **Heirloom** by Jazmine Brett aged 17

To read all the entries in the '18 and Under' age categories click [HERE](#)

Age 19+ – Joint Winners: **Wanderlust** – by Sarah Haggett and **Sunflowers and Corr...jets** – by Angela Susan Gooding. To read all the entries in the '19 and Over' age category click [HERE](#)

This year for the first time Creative Royston also ran a Poetry Competition and we are grateful to the well-known local poets Jude Simpson and J.S.Watts who very kindly gave their time to judge the entries and also to present the prizes on stage at our Community Event in Priory Gardens.

Thank you to all who entered the competition and David's Bookshops of Letchworth, which contributed some book vouchers as prizes.

Category winners for the Poetry Competition were:

Age Under 11 – **Circle of Life** by Rose Usher age 9

Age 11-18 – **Spring Twirled** by Imogen Clements age 12

Age 19+ – **Chalk** by Hilary Forrester

To read all the entries in our Poetry Competition click [HERE](#)



Creative Royston Arts Festival  
2022 Poetry Competition

Capture the Arts Festival theme 'Circle of Life' or just find your own inspiration to write up to 40 lines.

J.S.Watts & Jude Simpson, both successful and well-known local poets, will select a winner in each of the following age groups: 11 & under, 12-18, and 19+

Winners will each receive book vouchers to the value of £50 from David's Bookshop, Letchworth.

Deadline for entry: Sunday 14th August

Full details, competition rules and entry forms available from [creativeroyston.org](http://creativeroyston.org)

One entry per person



Hilary Forrester being presented with her prize by J.S.Watts and Jude Simpson at the Community Event in Priory Gardens on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September.

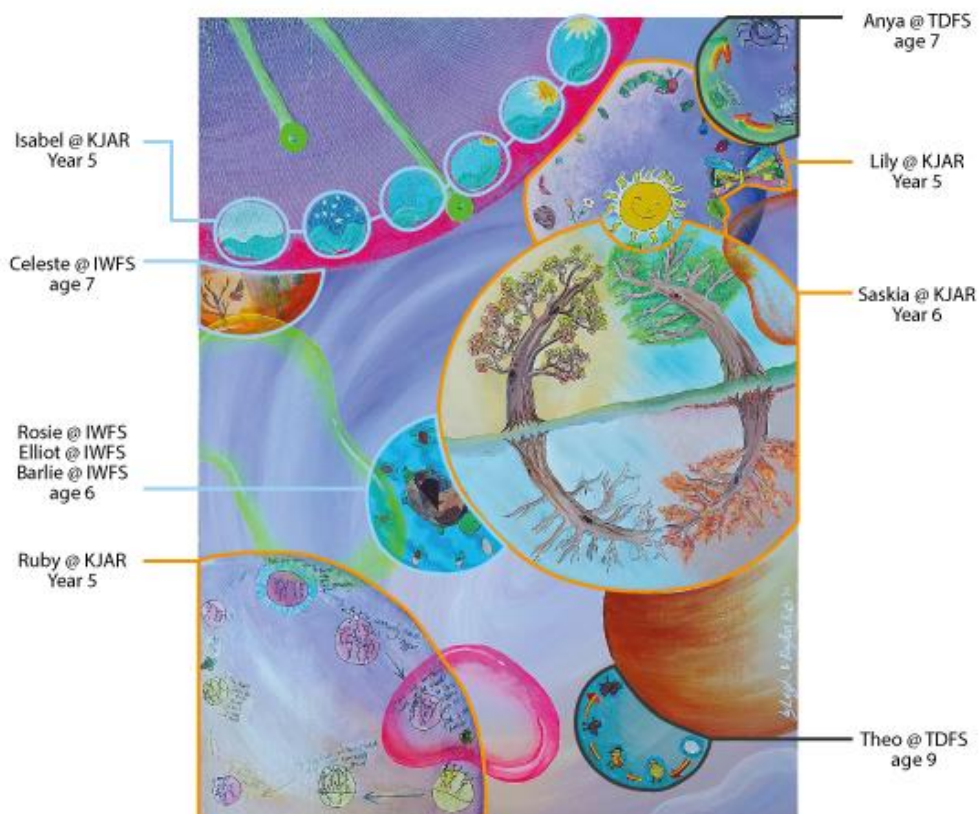
Picture courtesy of the Royston Crow.

## Cover Art Competition

Once again local artist Stacey Leigh-Ross (ByLeigh) was kind enough to spend some of her valuable time creating an original piece of art to reflect Royston schoolchildren's interpretation of the festival theme.

Although some of the schools were still clearly struggling to cope with the ongoing pandemic we were grateful for the help which they gave spreading the word about and collecting the entries for this competition. As a result, Stacey had over 50 entries to inspire the creation of her artwork which is shown below (and on the front cover) in the form of a 'winner's map' which shows the names of those children whose artwork was included in the final artwork.

Royston Arts Festival Programme Cover Art 2022  
**Winners' Map**



We did not produce a festival programme this year owing to the effect on publication deadlines caused by a large number of entries being finalised at a much later date than usual. Instead, we published the outline festival programme in the September edition of The Listing and proprietor, Cath Boughton, again kindly allowed Stacey's artwork to appear on the front cover.

It was also nice to be able to put the children's original artwork on display once again in Royston Library as we used to do pre-pandemic.

## Royston Arts Festival 2022 Programme

For the festival programme we split events into five different categories: 'Family Activity', 'Music', 'Performance & Film', 'Literature & Talks' and 'Exhibitions' and the majority were provided **FREE** of charge.

### FAMILY ACTIVITY

**BEEE Creative** led a **FREE** 25-minute fun creative dance activity for 1-4 year olds and accompanying adults. The movement-based activities included games, props and creative tasks which explored Royston's story took place on Friday 23rd at **Royston Museum** at 10.00, 10.30 & 11.30.

In **Jungle Explorers** at **Royston Museum** on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> you could have become an explorer and learnt about the animal kingdom with a series of exotic animal talks and handling sessions covering 'Mini Beasts', 'Rainforest Discovery', 'Paws, Claws & Whiskers' and 'Animal Explorer' for all age ranges.



You could have enjoyed a great day out in Royston on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> at our **FREE** Community Event in Priory Gardens. Stage entertainment was provided by **Limitless Academy for the Performing Arts** featuring a Showcase of excerpts from well-known musicals and extended highlights from The Adams Family musical. **Georgia Nevada** and her band entertained with support from 'Expenses', plus a Michael Jackson Tribute act and Bollywood and Kathak dancers.

There was **FREE** face painting & henna tattoos, storytelling and you could try your hand at art or magic shows and visit a range of stalls and sample some diverse food options or bring everything you needed for a picnic.



At the same time as all this was happening Royston Library was putting on **The Very Crafty Caterpillar** including a 'Very Hungry Caterpillar' storytime, followed by a caterpillar and butterfly craft session for 4 to 8 year-olds, all of which was **FREE**.

Also on the Saturday, Royston First's **best dressed window** competition for shops in the High Street came to a conclusion when the judges chose their winner from those taking part during the previous week.

On Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> **Fossil Hunters** aged between 5 to 15 could pick up a trowel and dig deep to unearth fossils and dinosaur bones at **Royston Museum**, then turn them into their very own works of art for just £2 and Members could participate for **FREE**.

## MUSIC

There was an opportunity for “adults aged 6-116” to **Sing with the Royston Roses** Choir at Icknield Walk First School at an open evening on Wednesday 21st where you could learn and sing a new arrangement of Sir Elton John's Circle of Life for **FREE**

Another hour of singing for all generations together, young or old, was organised by **All Sing** at Coombes Community Centre on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup>. **FREE** but donations to Home-Start at Royston, Buntingford and South Cambs were welcome.

**Royston MusicFest** was back on Sunday 25th! A variety of **FREE** music including covers, traditional & self-penned compositions, with a dash of Breton, Cajun & Blues influences, could be heard at Banyers House, the Conservative Club (open to all for this event), Jolly Postie & the Old Bull Inn from 12.00 to 17.00 and all the details could/can be found on [roystonmusicfest.uk](http://roystonmusicfest.uk)

Our first **Finale Concert** since 2019 took place at King James Academy Hall on Sunday 25th at 19.00 and was a celebration of the festival's theme ‘Circle of Life’ explored through music and song. Compered by **Sue Pettitt** from Hertfordshire Music Service who kindly stepped in at the last minute the concert featured performances by **Royston Town & Development Bands, Women Sing, & ensembles from King James Academy** and was a wonderful way to close our festival with a joyous session of community singing.

## PERFORMANCE & FILM

As well as their tremendous efforts for the Community Event **Limitless Academy for the Performing Arts** put on **The Road Less Travelled** in their new **Crow's Nest Theatre** in Melbourn Street, Royston ahead of the official start date for the festival from Thursday 15th to Saturday 17th. This was an evening of award-winning theatre and a very moving, awareness-raising performance, portraying the lifestyle of someone suffering from domestic violence.

To officially kick off the festival **Royston Picture Palace** put together a double bill of films connected to the festival theme on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup>. **THE LION KING (U)** at 2pm featuring classic songs such as “Circle of Life,” “I Just Can’t Wait to Be King,” and “Hakuna Matata,” brought a rare chance to see this classic Disney animation on the big screen. That was followed up at 5.30pm by **THE BEATLES AND INDIA (12A)** a unique historical chronicle of the enduring love affair between The Beatles and India that started more than half a century ago with rare archival footage, photographs and eye-witness accounts. The screening was Followed by a live Q&A with co-director Peter Compton interviewed by Amandeep Dhillon who facilitated the screening.

The award-winning '**In the Beginning**' animation was produced by **BEEE Creative**, directed by Shaun Clark - Flicker Mill and created with members of the Royston community. Synopsis: buried in darkness, a woman witnesses centuries passing by as she cries out to the world in search of her identity and place in the world. The 10m 45s film was played on a loop throughout the festival at Royston Museum from Thursday 22nd to Sunday 25th.

## LITERATURE & TALKS

On Thursday 22nd, **Royston Library** hosted a **Talk, Q&A, and Book-signing** by author **Jean Fullerton** about her childhood based on her new book - 'A Child of the East End'. A glass of wine was included in ticket courtesy of Tesco.

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A talk by historian and curator, Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthews on **The Neolithic Burial Mounds on Therfield Heath** took place at **Royston Museum** on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> with tickets priced at £3 but Museum Members **FREE**.

## EXHIBITIONS



In yet another **FREE** event **Royston Arts Society** staged its **AUTUMN EXHIBITION** at Royston Town Hall where visitors could view and purchase paintings from local and professional artists in Royston's largest, most diverse art exhibition. The exhibition ran from 20.00 on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> to 17.00 on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Priory Quilters** presented a **FREE** exhibition of quilts, needlework and textile items with some patchwork demonstrations on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> between 09.00 - 16.00/17.00 and also provided tea, coffee & cake on sale.



Also **FREE** and running over Saturday & Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> was **Royston Photographic Society's** exhibition of photographs from members of the Society on their interpretation of the theme "Circle of Life".

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## **Royston Arts Festival 2022 Attendance Figures**

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Owing to the effects of Covid a note of explanation is necessary about the attendance figures for the 2021 and 2020 festivals in order to measure the relative success of the 2022 festival.

The overall attendance for the 2021 festival was estimated to be 2,381 or 3,470 if one includes all the 'views' of the festival website during the festival period of 23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> September. To be clear, we do not normally include such figures but it seemed reasonable to do so for a hybrid festival. The number of 'views' recorded for the 2020 festival was 5,418, though it should be stressed that one visitor may take more than one 'view' of the festival. This seemed reasonable as 'visitors' to a live festival would normally be counted twice if they visited more than one event. In 2020, the festival period ran from the opening night on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September to the Finale Concert night on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September so we were comparing an online festival which ran for ten days, to a hybrid festival lasting only four, which may not make for a very valid comparison. Also, in 2020 it can be argued that the public had 'bought into' online events but in 2021 they had not yet recovered their appetite for live events.

In 2022, we estimated overall attendance at 4,552 which is a considerable improvement on 2021, more so when comparing it to the figure of 2,381 actual visitors and leaving aside the additional attendance then at online events.

Looking further back, we had approximately 5,500 visits to the 2019 festival which was the most successful for a few years at least. Pre-Covid, the poorest festival attendance in recent years was around 4,400 so the attendance this year of 4,552 is a very respectable achievement especially when set against the small committee and the absence of a couple of extra events, plus the shrinking number of venues for MusicFest.

## Feedback

Last year we tried out collecting feedback using QR codes linked to survey questions and whilst we did not achieve a lot of response we decided to try again as this way we would not be faced with the huge resource intensive work of collating feedback on sheets of paper.

The results were better though the fact that only 34 responses were received was still disappointing compared with pre-Covid equivalents of approximately 400 responses and we will need to think again about our approach next year.

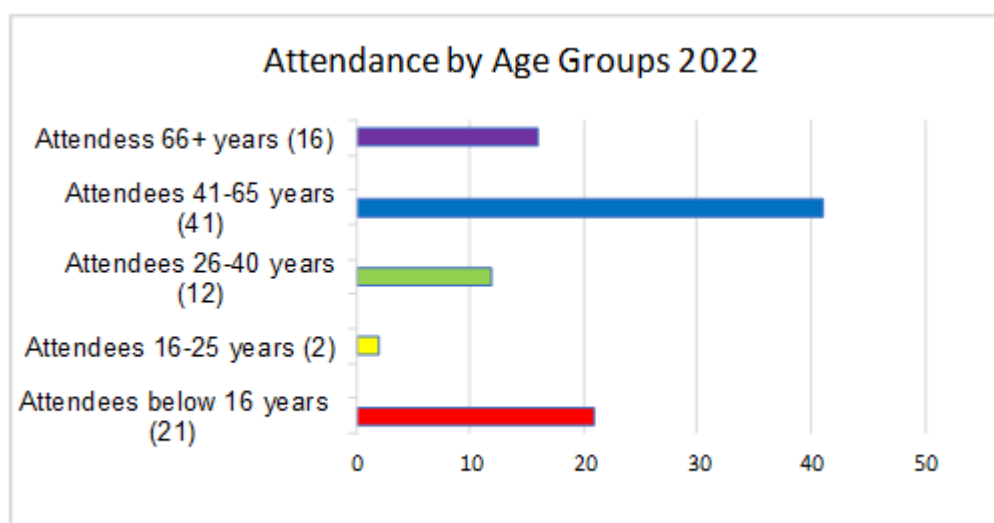
The more interesting feedback responses are shown below with my comments in italics.

### Q3 How did you hear about this year's festival?

| ANSWER CHOICES                | RESPONSES |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Creative Royston Website      | 3.03% 1   |
| Creative Royston social media | 27.27% 9  |
| The Listing                   | 15.15% 5  |
| Flyers and Banners            | 12.12% 4  |
| Word of Mouth                 | 21.21% 7  |
| Other                         | 21.21% 7  |

*The above figures reflect some trends that were apparent prior to Covid when we had feedback of around 400 responses for a few years. For example, social media continues to be of increasing importance, whereas the website figure is surprisingly small, perhaps due to the small sample. The absence of newspapers even amongst the 'Other' category reflects a longer term trend whilst 'Word of Mouth' remains important at a similar percentage as in the past.*

### Q8 Please state the number of people in your party for each age group below. This will help us identify if we managed to target all age groups.



*This sort of distribution of attendance amongst different age groups is fairly typical though perhaps we would normally not cater quite so well for the 'Below 16' category and perhaps quite not so badly for the 16-26 age group the results for which may have been distorted by the sample size. What is clear is that we must aim to do better for the 16-25 age group in future festivals.*

**Q6 What did you enjoy the most about this year's festival? (Verbatim responses shown below)**

- Exhibitions by local people; the sheer skill of so many of our neighbours in the town.
- The fact that is back after all the covid lockdowns, feeling of community being alive and getting together, amazing performances and art exhibitions and opportunity to volunteer.
- The atmosphere created in the town. Limitless Academy singing. Photographic Society exhibition.
- The Singers and dancers on the stage were great # Final concert at KJAR # variety
- Food stalls, music, henna
- The Limitless concert on Saturday and the finale on Sunday
- Town band, art, pub music # Live music # The variety of activities and shows on display
- I always enjoy the community aspect and like to see people from ROYSTON showing their fantastic skills.
- WomenSing # It's my first one and I love the community spirit
- I enjoyed the one event I attended # Music
- The talent and enthusiasm of the contributors # Tin Giants
- Atmosphere in jolly postie # Great range of music and dance
- Community feeling, live music
- Great entertainment on stage and the range of entertainment being diverse.
- The singing talent on display # Creative workshops # Park

**Q9 Do you have any other comments or suggestions? (Verbatim responses shown below)**

- Please can we have some classical music?
- Wider variety of music at the town venues
- could we have a more formal concert once the Church is back in us
- I feel this was poorly advertised on social media- could have been shared more widely and posted to local villages FB pages?
- Really appreciate the event and all who help make it happen
- Thank you for all the hard work, we had a great time
- The publicity should have included postal notification/flyers rather than relying on online and the listing only
- I only found out about it at the last minute and therefore wasn't able to attend as I had other plans. I think it could be a really great event for Royston but don't feel it was very well advertised. I would be interested in helping to promote it if it goes ahead in future.
- Better coverage in the Royston Crow before the event
- Considering the theme of the festival was Circle of Life, very few of the images on display had a connection to that theme. Publicity for this years festival seemed rather lacking compared with previous years.
- Enjoyable afternoon
- Book Tin Giants again. Shame we didn't have a stage in the park

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- Very poor publicity this year and lack of feedback forms at each event. QR codes are not very satisfactory
- as people like to fill in actual forms whilst at the venue.
- Leaflets on tables of who is on when.
- Great series of events. Appreciate the efforts in organising such a great festival
- It would have been helpful if there was a hot drinks stand as it wasn't that warm at times. In order to attract more people, an alcohol stand would have been beneficial for people to stay and enjoy a drink. The police were in attendance so there would not have been disruptive behaviour, and the majority of people were families. Some of the market stalls should have set up in the gardens to attract more people. A Christmas or craft stall would also have been great.

*The music events are seemingly very popular and perhaps could be extended or organised differently to present more choice. We chose not to publish a MusicFest programme as it was suspected that last-minute changes might be necessary owing to Covid. Several such changes were in fact necessary and instead we relied on an up-to-date online programme on the Royston MusicFest website.*

*Publicity is always an issue but we choose to use The Listing magazine because of its unparalleled ability to reach every household in our area, essentially just as efficient as postal notification at a fraction of the price. Of course, we can't insist that people read everything that comes through their doors.*

*It wasn't that warm later on at the Community Event and hot drinks may have helped. I think we also learnt the lesson that the previous length of Community Events, starting around 1pm and ending between 4-5pm were about right both from the weather and attendance point of view. Alcohol may have attracted more people but whilst the police presence was welcome it was not arranged.*

*We were let down to some extent by being drawn into a commitment to accommodate a 'diversity' event within our Community Event which would have been great. Our Town Mayor, Mary Antony, arranged Bollywood and Kathak dancers for the stage, and Amandeep Dhillon facilitated the screening of 'The Beatles In India' but others failed to live up to their promises. Ideally, we would like to have a greater range of stalls and with a larger committee and a commitment to a Community Event at an earlier planning stage we hope to do better.*

## Marketing and Promotion

As usual, the website was used to provide more substantial pieces of information such as a complete and up-to-date festival programme, beyond which our marketing effort comprised four main areas of activity: the programme; banners, posters and flyers; press and social media; and communication with schools.

### The Programme:

There was little alternative to following the practice of the previous two festivals in deciding not to produce a standalone A5 booklet-type festival programme owing to the lack of committee personnel and the absence of a graphic designer prepared to undertake the job. Therefore, once again we advertised the festival programme in the centre pages of the September edition of The Listing which, with a cover devoted to the festival artwork created by Stacey Leigh-Ross, provided the maximum local publicity that is available in terms of direct delivery to individual households.

The Listing Magazine is delivered to 17,000 households each month, reaching 7,550 households in Royston itself and 9,450 households in the South Cambridgeshire and North Hertfordshire villages surrounding Royston, specifically: Abington Piggotts, Arrington, Ashwell, Barkway, Barley, Bassingbourn, Fowlmere, Great Chishill, Guilden Morden, Heydon, Kelshall, Kneesworth, Litlington, Melbourn, Meldreth, Odsey, Orwell, Reed, Shepreth, Steeple Morden, Therfield, Thriplow, Whaddon and Wimpole.

### Banners, posters and flyers:

Vinyl banners were displayed at Tesco roundabout, Royston Rail Station (2), The Jolly Postie, Royston Town Hall and Banyers House. Royston Library and Tesco both kindly allowed us to create substantial window displays comprising a number of posters advertising festival events and the Rail Station also allowed us to put up posters all over their platforms. Royston Kite Festival took place in August for the first time post-Covid and distributed 2,000 programmes to around 6,000 visitors. All but about 200 of those 2,000 contained flyers advertising the arts festival and we thank Royston Rotary Club for allowing us to distribute our flyers in this way.

**COMMUNITY**

Thursday September 8, 2022 | www.thelisting.com.uk

### Arts Festival to return with packed programme of events, exhibitions, talks, music, family activities and more

Royston Arts Festival is due to return this month with a packed programme of exhibitions, talks, music, family activities and more.

The festival will return on Sunday, September 18, with a week-long programme of events running from 10am to 5pm on the main weekend from Friday, September 23 to Sunday, September 25.

It will start with a silent film festival, and will feature exhibitions at Royston's new Jew's Street Theatre, along with a mix of other activities and events, including talks, music and family activities.

The festival is organised by a group of volunteers and is free to attend. Chairperson Carl Filly said: "While we enjoyed it last year, it was a challenge to organise in pandemic-restricted years. I am delighted that we will be able to stage a full festival again this year. Thanks to help from Royston's Labour Mayor for the Performing Arts, a community event will be held by Priory Gardens on Saturday, September 16, with three acts of family-oriented entertainment and activities. There will be stage entertainment from two local acts, musical skills, arts-related activities, from Royston's own and local artists, with a wide variety of food on offer.

Royston Music Fest will be held on the afternoon of Sunday, September 25, and will feature live musical entertainment in public.

Other events include Royston Arts Society's autumn exhibition, an exhibition from Royston's Philharmonic Society, a book signing from author, John Hollister at Royston Library and a talk at Royston Museum about the 'Royston' brand on Monday, The Field House.

Visitors are still desperately needed for the community event on Priory Gardens and the main weekend, and anyone who can spare a couple of hours for either of these events would be most welcome.

More information and a full programme of events can be found at <http://www.roystonartsfest.com>.

### Press and Social Media:

The Listing magazine, as always, was very helpful in providing regular articles and updates on our activities during the year and particularly in the build-up to the festival. The Royston Crow provided some coverage of the festival two weekends prior to the start date with an inside page article which is reproduced here.

## Annual Report 2022

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Social media continues to play an important role in our marketing activity. The festival's social media presence was significantly boosted by a number of local accounts and we'd like to thank everyone who helped to raise awareness by posting, liking and sharing.

Last year when we lacked a dedicated marketing person we published only 5 Facebook posts during September leading up to the festival which reached 4,346 people. By contrast this year we published 40 posts and reached 11,135 people and the total number of people liking the Creative Royston Facebook page increased by around 30% from 615 to 803.

We made much better use of Twitter in September 2022 sending a total of 36 Tweets compared with only 7 in 2021, earning 3,755 impressions, 1,630 Profile visits, 17 Mentions and 8 new followers. We now have 1,097 followers which is up by 3 since last year, so there is still room for improved use of Twitter.

### **Schools:**

We continue to work with schools in Royston and the surrounding villages and thank them for their help with our Cover Art, Creative Writing and Poetry competitions this year. and thank those schools that helped us to publicise those competitions this year.

We appreciate that it has again been a particularly difficult year for schools and we hope that we can resume and consolidate our previously strong relationship with most of the schools when circumstances allow.

In particular, we felt that we had re-established good relations with King James Academy this year following the inevitable hiatus during the pandemic. We also thank them for making their Senior Hall available for our Finale Concert and we hope that we can continue to work together more closely in the future.

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## Creative Royston Draft Financial Statements For the year ending 31 December 2022

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For approval by the Annual General Meeting on 17th January 2023

### Supporting Statement

Thank you first of all to our Premier Partner, Johnson Matthey, who were very generous in their support and sponsorship in again providing the £5,000 which the company kindly donates to Creative Royston each year. The funding from Johnson Matthey is normally agreed on a three-year cycle and 2021 was the final year of one cycle but the company very kindly agreed to hold that sum over until 2022 when we thought it could be put to better use.

Prior to 2021, when we decided to use up some of our existing funds to put on a reduced and hybrid festival, The Brian Lesley Racher Trust has given us great assistance, regularly supporting MusicFest in its entirety and also making a substantial contribution to the production or distribution of our festival programme. In 2022 we were very grateful for their £3,500 contribution towards MusicFest and our Community Event in Priory Gardens.

Also, prior to Covid, Royston First Bid regularly contributed £2,000 each year towards the festival publicity and production of the programme and we are very grateful that they agreed once more to make such a contribution in 2022.

In the continuing absence of a Treasurer, I have again put together an Income & Expenditure Account covering the 2022 financial year. It shows that Creative Royston remains in a healthy financial position and the organisation closed the year with a general reserve fund of **£23,161.64** which is exactly the 'Opening Balance' of **£22,401.77** plus income of **£11,304.50** minus the Total Expenditure of **£10,544.63**.

In 2022 we have therefore made a notional 'profit' of **£759.87** which is useful for insurance purposes. Our present event insurance requires Creative Royston to make a 'profit' at least once every 3 financial years.

By way of further explanation this year, I have added notes against some of the expenditure where I felt it would be helpful.

Carl Filby  
Chairperson  
January 2023

**DRAFT Income & Expenditure Account Year ending 31 December 2022**

|  | 2022             | 2021             | 2020            | 2019             | 2018             |
|--|------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>OPENING BANK BALANCE</b>                      | <b>22,401.77</b> |                  |                 |                  |                  |
| <b>INCOME</b>                                    | <b>£</b>         | <b>£</b>         | <b>£</b>        | <b>£</b>         | <b>£</b>         |
| Sponsorship                                      | 5,000.00         | 0                | 5,150.00        | 7,150.00         | 7,950.00         |
| Grants   | 5,500.00         | 0                | 2,700.00        | 4,700.00         | 4,700.00         |
| Ticket Sales & Other Earned Income <sup>1</sup>  | 804.50           | 0                | 26.97           | 8,750.87         | 2,843.18         |
| <b>TOTAL INCOME</b>                              | <b>11,304.50</b> | <b>0</b>         | <b>7,876.97</b> | <b>20,600.87</b> | <b>15,093.18</b> |
| <b>EXPENDITURE</b>                               |                  |                  |                 |                  |                  |
| Artist fees & associated expenses                | 3,150.00         | 1,345.00         | 975.00          | 6,071.29         | 5,140.25         |
| Advertising & Marketing                          | 72.14            | 27.00            | 0.00            | 129.20           | 5,480.01         |
| Volunteer Costs                                  | 30.00            | 0.00             | 80.00           | 72.80            | 50.00            |
| Equipment & materials Costs <sup>2</sup>         | 4,033.25         | 104.59           | 373.10          | 1,396.67         | 1,095.00         |
| Seed-Funding & prizes                            | 538.29           | 427.50           | 156.75          | 1,154.84         | 660.32           |
| Venue Costs                                      | 40.00            | 0.00             | 0.00            | 227.00           | 280.50           |
| Insurance, First Aid and Licences                | 477.40           | 218.40           | 268.40          | 260.40           | 317.40           |
| Stocks for Refreshments / Bar sales <sup>3</sup> | 168.63           | 21.57            | 0.00            | 210.61           | 200.00           |
| Miscellaneous                                    | 13.20            | 0.00             | 77.58           | 52.64            | 1,575.40         |
| Printing Costs (non-programme)                   | 41.90            | 12.00            | 99.00           | 145.50           | 0.00             |
| Programme Costs                                  | 1,507.20         | 1,353.60         | 1,359.00        | 3,558.73         | †                |
| Donation to Royston Parish Church                | 0.00             | 0.00             | 0.00            | 2,396.16         | 0.00             |
| Repayment of Unused Grant (to BLRT)              | 0.00             | 0.00             | 256.00          | 0.00             | 0.00             |
| <b>Governance Costs</b>                          |                  |                  |                 |                  |                  |
| Subscriptions                                    | 0.00             | 0.00             | 0.00            | 0.00             | 199.00           |
| Website & IT costs <sup>4</sup>                  | 468.54           | 46.93            | 50.85           | 94.82            | 30.00            |
| AGM  | 0.00             | 0.00             | *               | *                | 50.00            |
| Stationery & Postage                             | 4.08             | 0.00             | 4.56            | 0.00             | 150.00           |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>                         | <b>10,544.63</b> | <b>3,556.59</b>  | <b>3,700.24</b> | <b>15,770.66</b> | <b>15,227.88</b> |
| PLUS LATE INVOICES                               | 0.00             | 0.00             | 0.00            | 494.01           | 1,432.24         |
| <b>NET INCOME FOR THE YEAR</b>                   | <b>759.87</b>    | <b>-3,556.59</b> | <b>4,176.73</b> | <b>4,336.20</b>  | <b>-1,566.94</b> |
| <b>CLOSING BANK BALANCE</b>                      | <b>23,161.64</b> |                  |                 |                  |                  |

† included in Advertising & Marketing

\* included in Miscellaneous

**Notes (Applying to 2022)**

1. Ticket and bar receipts from Finale Concert
2. Including Stage & Sound System hire of £3,510
3. Mainly wine for resale also for post-festival review evening. 14 bottles remain in stock.
4. Mainly one-off renewal of website hosting costs for next 5 years

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## Looking Ahead

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2022 was difficult for a number of reasons which have already been mentioned above but which did not prevent us from having a successful festival in the circumstances.

At the time of writing, several people have come forward to express an interest in joining the Creative Royston Management Committee which bodes well for the 2023 festival as does the fact that we had more than 20 people come forward as potential volunteer helpers this year, a little more than we actually required. We hope that we can hang on to those volunteers in subsequent years and some have already expressed their intention to join the committee.

Towards the end of November we held a post-festival review / volunteer's reward evening at Royston Museum and the major item on the agenda was a discussion of a potential move for the festival from a date in late September to one in the Spring. A straw poll conducted during the evening found that more than two thirds of attendees (around 34 representing various local arts groups, Royston schools and volunteers) favoured a move to the Spring. It was agreed that CRMC would investigate the possibilities by carrying out more detailed consultations and if agreed the first 'moved' festival would take place in Spring 2024 with an interim, reduced in size festival taking place around the usual time in September 2023.

On that optimistic note let's end by once again wishing everyone all the very best in 2023.

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