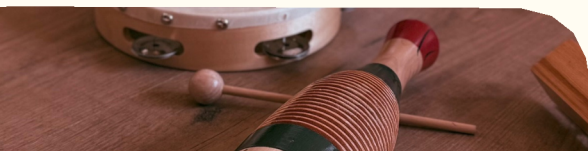




music as therapy
international

Annual Report

2025



Celebrating 30 years!

Music as Therapy International

Charity Number 1208086

www.musicastherapy.org

Current trustees: John Ellis, Sana Gujral,
Rebecca Huttly, Makeda Mitchell,
Charlotte Surun OBE, Lucy Swanson

This year our activities have been overseen by the Board members listed above and three additional Trustees who have recently moved on to pastures new.

We are grateful to Karina Brown, Dr. Hannah Reid and Jane Robbie for their incredible collective 46 years of service to the charity.

This year saw caregivers turning to our proven activities in larger numbers than ever.

In 2025, music has helped more than:

380 places providing care and education

850 people working at the heart of care

25,900 children and adults in vulnerable situations

2025 marks 30 years of supporting caregivers around the world to use music to strengthen the care they provide. It's a milestone of which I'm deeply proud.



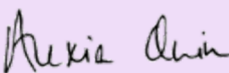
In this report, you'll hear from people working at the heart of care about the difference music is making. You'll see it's about so much more than just the figures on the page opposite. From children building confidence to communicate when language is difficult, through to people living with dementia having the chance to share memories and moments of joy with the people around them. Their stories never cease to inspire me.

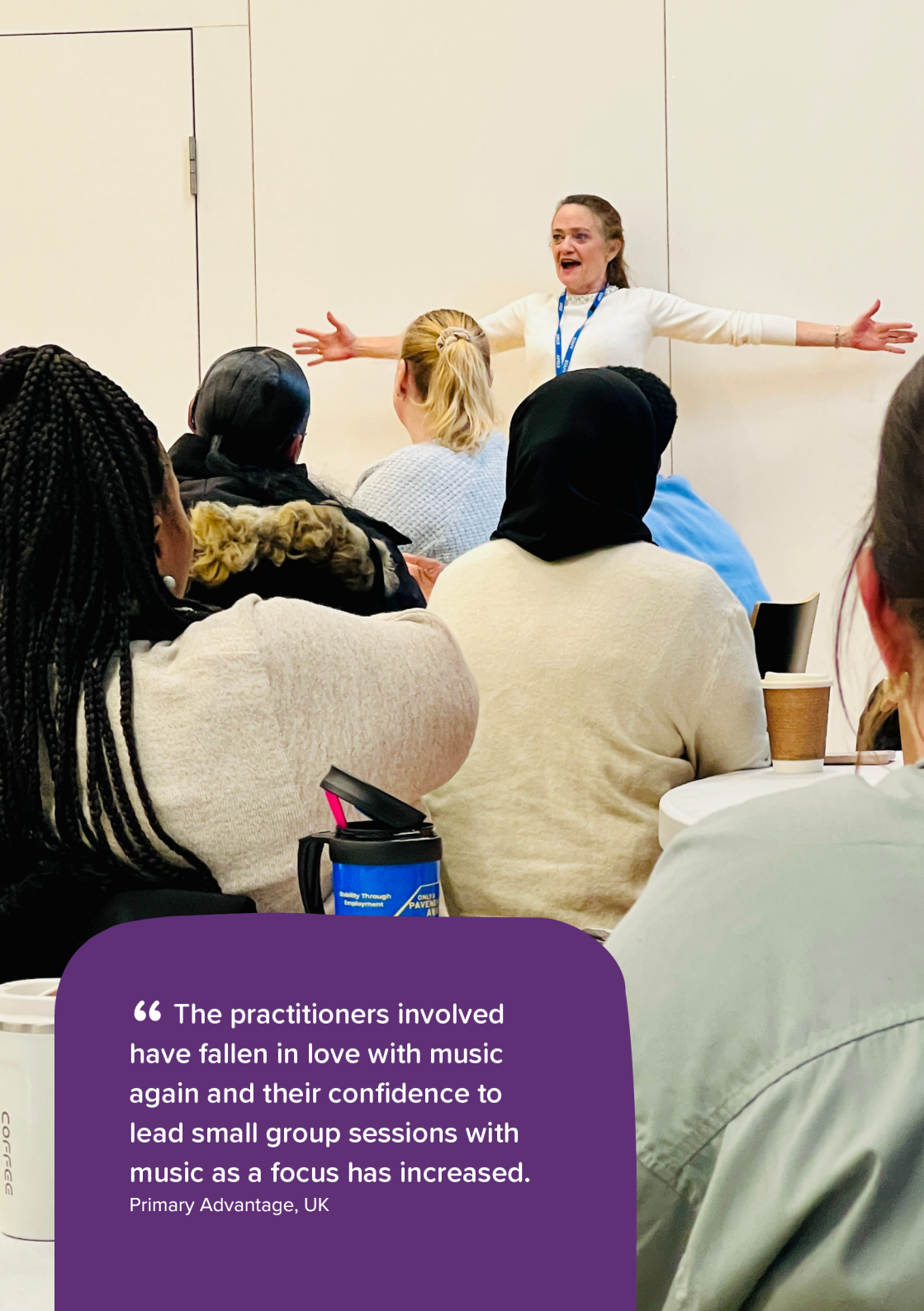
Music, together with the insight you can gain from musical interactions, really does help caregivers, teachers and activity leaders to feel more confident in how they help those they support to thrive.

Towards the end of this report you can see how we intend to take our work forward. But, as for so many charities, this year has been financially tough for us. With unprecedented fundraising challenges and costs still rising, securing funds is taking longer and is critical before we can develop the projects we have in the pipeline for the next three years.

So on the final pages of this report you'll see how we urgently need your help to establish a new Response Fund. Your support will make sure we don't keep people giving and receiving care waiting.

Thank you.


Alexia Quin OBE
Director



“ The practitioners involved have fallen in love with music again and their confidence to lead small group sessions with music as a focus has increased.

Primary Advantage, UK

Inspiring caregivers

Social media and external communications give us targeted ways to inspire caregivers at every step of their journey. In 2025 this helped us attract new caregivers to our training and reach more than 160 of our existing Partners as they embed music into care around the world.

Some turned to us to refresh their musical instrument collections (Romania); we collaborated with our Partners on a 'music in education' resource (Ethiopia), and we brought others together to share experiences of using music (Georgia).

A highlight was developing connections where our work has been disrupted by conflict: We heard from two Partners still using music in Palestine despite the escalation of violence in the region, and from a teacher in Myanmar, with whom we shared our Burmese guidance on using music with children with disabilities.

7%

of enrollees on Music Helps UK were inspired to do so by our social media posts

119

new care providers and influencers championing best care practice discovered our work through social media

“ Thank you for your information and especially for the value placed on the work I have done. I am very happy to read about my journey on your various social networks.

Health & care professional
Democratic Republic of the Congo

Kasia is one of 19 Early Years practitioners we trained this year. Her story embodies the way using music can boost a individual's confidence in their abilities.



“ I have always been eager to learn new skills and gain new knowledge. So, when I got the chance to study the Interactive Music-Making course I took it. I had determination and a willingness to step outside my comfort zone.

There were moments of challenges. Times my sessions didn't flow as planned, or when I struggled to engage a child in the way I hoped. But these experiences became lessons. They pushed me to adapt, to experiment with new techniques, and to reflect deeply on my own practice. Growth! Even when the path wasn't clear.

One of the families I worked with taught me that music is an important tool for emotional expression and social connection.

Through musical interactions and positive encouragement, I supported a quiet, anxious child to begin to find her voice. Not through words at first, but through rhythm, laughter and singing.

I'm proud of the progress I've made on this course. Much of the confidence and self-belief that I gained through Interactive Music-Making training inspired me to further my studies in September 2025.

I'm proud of the role I can now play in supporting children's development within my sessions at Babyzone.

Equipping caregivers

This year we drew on our tried-and-tested approaches to equip 24 caregivers of young children (UK), 173 caring for people living with dementia (UK and India), and 53 supporting children with disabilities (Georgia, Romania and Jordan). We also responded to requests from Partners in Ethiopia, Moldova, Palestine, India, Rwanda and the UK, helping them keep the benefits of music available to the children and adults in their care.

New for us in 2025 was extending our work into Kenya, where we offered on-site skill-sharing to equip staff to use music with 200 children at Bombolulu School of Promise, Mombasa.

“ I learned about patience in working with children, focusing not on progress, but on connection.

Educator, Romania

“ I found that music can be a great way to break down barriers, as a shy child can express themselves through playing or clapping instead of singing... I had to find the best way for each child to get the most out of it.

Professional caregiver, Jordan

“ I learnt that looking, waiting and listening are very key during the session as they allow space for group members to express themselves and interact freely.

Educator, Kenya

“ I gained a clearer understanding of how to musically connect with the beneficiary... how to build more trust.

Professional caregiver, Georgia

Entrusting others

In 2025, entrusting others to compliment the skills of our team strengthened our activities and helped us extend our reach:

11 translators helped us connect across cultures, languages and communities (like Ildephonse who worked on Alphonsine's story opposite).

20 music therapists, care providers, psychologists and programme leaders worked with us to deliver training tailored to specific groups of caregivers.

30 volunteers and one brilliant web developer all played a vital role in helping us drive forward our mission.

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Merci

Thank you



Alphonsine is one of the 38 individuals in seven countries around the world we entrust to deliver training. Her story captures the experience of pioneering music-based care in Rwanda.



“ I have been using music since 2010. Music helps me in my daily work with 50 students with mental, physical, hearing and speech disabilities, and there are changes because they are changing, in their studies and in their daily lives.

You can teach a child to be a great person and to have confidence in their singing, playing, and showing others with no shame. I strive for every child to be confident in themselves.

I am confident in myself in everything I do because of music as therapy. My knowledge can educate others according to how it has helped me. I will never give up, I will keep on providing training to old persons and youth.

A strong lesson is that you could think things can't change but if you keep on, you find music as therapy leads to positive changes and you need not to give up.

Even if I have no means, my vision is to bring music as therapy to all levels until district level, invite all beneficiaries, train them and showing them the benefits of music and what they can gain from it, because music is important.

Focusing on impact

The driving motivation behind everything we do is the genuine, lasting impact it has for people in vulnerable situations and those who provide their care.

This was as important as ever when we extended our online training course Music Helps this year to reach caregivers in the UK as well as India.

“ I realised that people with dementia can still experience joy, creativity, and connection through music... I understood the importance of focusing on the individual's preferences and life story rather than just symptoms.

Professional caregiver, UK

“ I discovered that even when verbal communication becomes difficult, music can still reach the person in deep and meaningful ways.

Community musician, UK

“ The course has not only brought therapeutic value to our residents and staffs but also strengthened the emotional connection between staff and residents.

Professional caregiver, India



Gill is one of more than 400 people worldwide who accessed Music Helps in 2025. Her story beautifully illustrates how exploring music can support people caring for a family member.



“It prompted me to reflect on my own relationship to music... The key moment for me was the photo album journey and the link through music to the important moment's in her life. As the songs were playing I was thinking of my Mom and the ways in which music has been a constant in our family life. The idea that music is a way we can perhaps find a connection as her disease progresses brings me hope.

Throughout the examples and videos, I was reflecting on similar moments with my Mom and thinking about how I will change my approach next time... I do think it changed my thinking and gave me ideas on how to communicate more effectively.

Over the last year I have been learning to play guitar with the aim of playing alongside my Dad in the hopes that my Mom will join in and feel included as we tackle some favourite family songs together. Most recently we all enjoyed a singalong to Neil Diamond's 'Sweet Caroline', an old favourite of my Mom's.

She seemed to come alive and the pieces of her we have lost fell away. She remembered the words, was singing, and actually danced a little. It was such a joyous moment for us all... really, the most important thing is the emotional connection we can build in those moments.

Learning from others

Reflecting on our 30th anniversary, we believe our work endures because of the way our approach evolves with every year that passes. Listening to our Partners, learning from sector experts, using their insight and the experiences of others all shaped our activities and thinking this year.

The consultation we undertook with our Advisory Panel in January was key to our learning. Comprising 24 music therapists, the Panel's diverse professional experiences, knowledge and range of perspectives helped hone our focus as we concluded our current strategic period and prepared for our next chapter.

“ The Advisory Panel helps the organisation stay connected to reality and ensure its work remains relevant, practical, and responsive.

Advisory Panel member since 2018

More than

160

team hours spent actively learning from webinars, networking events, discovery calls and research

“ The Panel brings experience... a sounding board for the charity to test out new ideas and thoughts, to gain clarity and also have a sense of accountability.

Advisory Panel member since 1999

“ There are always rich discussions... voices which question, challenge and help to shed light.

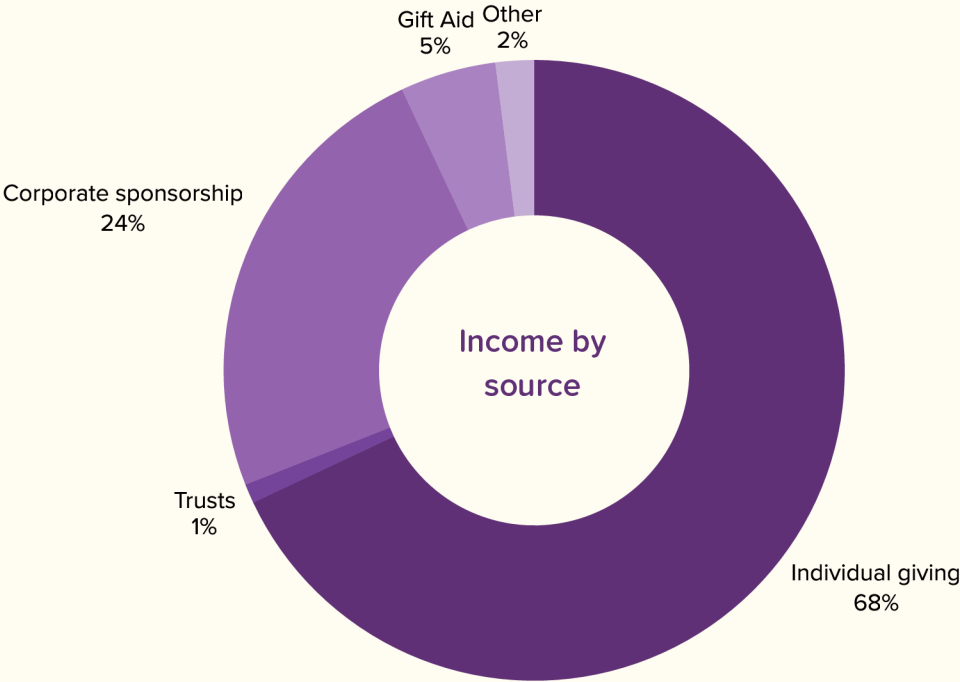
Advisory Panel member since 2014



“ Recognising our position as a UK charity, located in a country which has very complex histories with some of the countries we work in, we’re aware of the risk of power imbalances. We always seek to address this by asking questions, listening and learning from those we collaborate with, so we can avoid imposing our way of thinking and practices.

Makeda, International Programme Manager / Trustee

2024 Accounts - Income

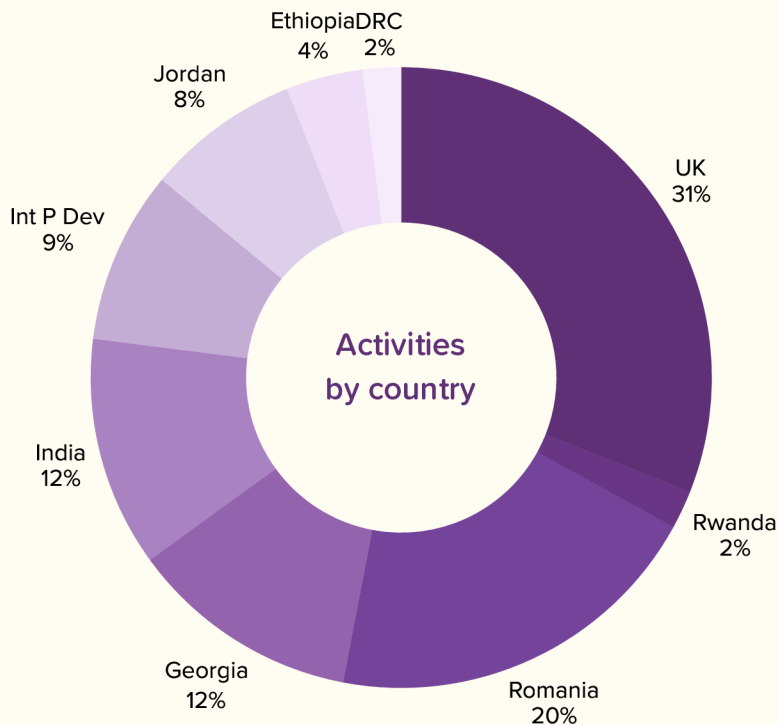


Income	GBP (£)
Unrestricted Income	112,098
Restricted Income	53,385
Activity Generated Income	1,690
Total cash income	167,173

Notes

These are the 2024 accounts for Music as Therapy International (Charity No. 1070760). In 2025 Music as Therapy International became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Charity Number 1208086), taking on all the assets and operations of the originating organisation.

2024 Accounts - Expenditure



With thanks

Alongside the generosity of more than 80 individual donors, and Gifts in Kind from five project partners, we were grateful for the support of Capital Group, Cupsmith Ltd, Eleanor Rathbone Charitable Trust, The Fineman Trust, Gordon Fraser Charitable Trust, The Syncona Foundation, and Vanneck Ltd in 2024-25.

Expenditure	GBP (£)
Charitable activities	149,033
Core costs	26,516
Fundraising	15,658
Total cash expenditure	191,207
Surplus/Deficit	-24,034



**We've been strengthening
care with music for 30 years...**



What's next?

Our strategy for the next three years sets out a coherent plan so we can invest our resources for the greatest possible impact. We're going to take all the best parts of our work forward with us, and make them even better. With your help, we'll create a lasting legacy of change.

Our goals:

- **Extend our reach** by training new caregivers to improve care for more people in more places.
- **Evolve with the times** to upgrade our proven training models and increase our organisational capacity.
- **Secure the future** use of music in care for people in vulnerable situations worldwide.

“ Reflecting on 30 years of impact inspires us to keep going. Challenges inevitably lie ahead, but with strategic clarity and the support of those who share our vision, we can face the next chapter with confidence.

John Ellis, Chair of the Board of Trustees

Support our response

Over the past 30 years we've grown from one project for staff and children in a single orphanage in Romania, to a portfolio of activities spanning 11 countries and involving hundreds of caregivers every year.

Securing funding for them all takes time. We've submitted over 20 funding applications this year, but with competition for funding in the sector fiercer than ever, responses can take months, and may never come.

The hardest thing about this is that while we wait, the caregivers who have reached out for help are waiting, too.

Caregivers like those at TAFTA, a non-profit care provider in South Africa asking for our help to embed music into their care of over 4,000 elderly people, many of whom are struggling with dementia.



And while these caregivers are waiting, the needs of the people living with dementia are increasing as the condition progresses. Time isn't on their side.

This is why we're appealing to you now. **Will you help us establish a Response Fund, so we don't have to keep these caregivers – and many more like them – waiting?**

We need to raise £30,000 to create this new fund. It's not a small amount, but we know we can do it if everyone pitches in to help.

Our Response Fund will introduce music into care practice in ways we know make a lasting difference. **Let's not keep them waiting.**

Yes, I'll help you establish a Response Fund!

I have enclosed my cheque, payable to: Music as Therapy International
for the amount of:

☐ £50 ☒ £200 ☐ £1,000 ☐ £ _____
Other amount

This amount will really make a difference!

Give on a regular basis

I would like to make a regular Direct Debit donation of £ _____

☐ Monthly ☐ Quarterly ☐ Annually

Commencing on: 01 / ____ / ____ or 15 / ____ / ____ (Please complete)

Name of account holder(s):

Address:

Postcode:

Bank account information

Name of bank/building society:

Bank address:

Postcode:

Sort code: Account number:

Signature:

Date:

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☐ I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Prefer to give online?

Visit our website or scan the QR code:

www.musicastherapy.org/response-fund



Music as Therapy International

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Email: info@musicastherapy.org



music as therapy
international

Registered Charity No: 1208086

Additional historic Charity Commission records and accounts for the original registered charity (Music as Therapy, charity number 1070760) can be found on the register of merged charities.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-of-merged-charities



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