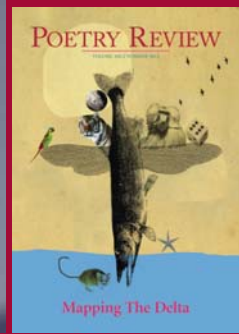


# The Poetry Society ANNUAL REPORT

31 March 2013



**THE POETRY SOCIETY  
(INCORPORATED)**

**Company Registration Number: 00190736  
Charity Registration Number: 303334**

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED  
31 MARCH 2013**

**The Poetry Society (Incorporated)**  
**Trustees, Officers and Professional Advisers**

<b>The Board of Trustees</b>	Paul Ranford (appointed 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2011, resigned 28 <sup>th</sup> November 2012) Martin Alexander (appointed 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2011, reappointed 28 <sup>th</sup> November 2012) Stephen Wilson (appointed 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2011) Katriona Andrews (appointed 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2011) Laurence Smith (appointed 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2011) Shanta Acharya (appointed 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2011) Robert Hutchison (appointed 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2011) Sir Stephen Irwin (appointed 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2011) Heather Neil (appointed 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2011) Michael Schmidt (appointed 14 <sup>th</sup> September 2011, reappointed 28 <sup>th</sup> November 2012) Jonathon Sayers (appointed 28 <sup>th</sup> November 2012) Neil Reeder (appointed 28 <sup>th</sup> November 2012) Jesper Groenvold (appointed 28 <sup>th</sup> November 2012)
<b>Director</b>	Judith Palmer
<b>Registered Office</b>	22 Betterton Street London WC2H 9BX
<b>Company Number</b>	00190736
<b>Charity Number</b>	303334
<b>Auditors</b>	Kingston Smith LLP 141 Wardour Street London W1F 0UT
<b>Bankers</b>	NatWest Finsbury Square Branch PO Box 549 78 Finsbury Pavement London EC2A 1JA

**The Poetry Society (Incorporated)**  
**Annual Report and Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2013**

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# The Poetry Society (Incorporated)

## Trustees Report

### For the year ended 31 March 2013

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their Report and the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2013. The Financial Statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and The Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP 2005). The Trustees also confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

## **Corporate Structure, Governance and Management**

### **Structure**

The Poetry Society (Incorporated) is a company limited by guarantee (company number: 190736) and a registered charity (registration number: 303334). The Poetry Society was founded in 1909 and incorporated in 1923. Poetry Place Limited (company number: 3173544) is the wholly owned subsidiary of the Poetry Society.

### **Recruitment of Trustees**

A call for nominations is sent out annually to all members of the Society, who are invited to nominate suitable persons to the board. A skills audit is conducted annually to ensure that the board recruits new members with the required skills. Nominations are submitted by the existing board where appropriate, to supplement those that come from within the membership.

### **Appointment and resignation of Trustees**

The Articles of Association require that there be a minimum of 5 trustees and a maximum of 14 of which 12 must be elected. At each AGM one third of the elected members must resign (generally the longest serving members) and new members elected. Retiring Trustees may be re-nominated and serve a second term, but for no longer than a duration of six years. Nominations are received and are then put forward for election at the AGM. Society members can vote by proxy or by attending the meeting. Those receiving the maximum number of votes are elected. Trustees may co-opt members to the board to fill vacancies but these must be approved at the next AGM.

### **Induction and Training**

New trustees are provided with a Trustee Induction Pack, supported by an induction session with the Director and members of staff, prior to the first regular Council meeting of their tenure. Trustees attended a Clore Board Development Training day in April 2012.

### **Decision Making Process**

The elected council has overall decision making powers but may delegate some of those powers to sub-committees or individuals. In particular the day to day running of the society is delegated to the Director who has a job description specifying their responsibilities. An annual plan and budget is presented to the council for approval prior to the start of the financial year. This outlines the planned activities for the year, costs them and gives approximate timescales. When approved it is the responsibility of the Director to implement the Annual Plan. Meetings are held at least quarterly where the plan is monitored. A finance report is presented which compares actual income and expenditure compared to budget.

### **Related Parties**

Poetry Place Limited is the trading arm of The Poetry Society. This is a café/bar which provides refreshments and food for members and also a space for meetings and activities that promote the objectives of the Society

## **Objectives, Planning and Achievements for the Public Benefit**

### **Objects**

The objects of the Society are to promote the study, use and enjoyment of poetry. To achieve our objectives and to maximise their social benefit we currently have the following priorities:

- To support poetry enthusiasts through the membership scheme and development of our regional member Stanza groups.
- To run the National Poetry Competition, the Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award, the Geoffrey Dearmer Prize, the Members Poetry Prize, SLAMBassadors UK, Ted Hughes Award and other projects which improve the profile and appreciation of poetry, and innovation and excellence in the artform.
- To publish *Poetry Review* and *Poetry News* quarterly; and other publications as appropriate.
- To use our education expertise to promote poetry and poets in schools through advocacy, residency programmes, teaching resources and training for teachers.
- To continue our work with young people both in and out of mainstream education through our poet residencies, competitions, professional development opportunities and digital initiatives such as the Young Poets Network. To

# The Poetry Society (Incorporated)

## Trustees Report

### For the year ended 31 March 2013

- strengthen our training programmes for both practising and trainee teachers, promoting the use of poetry across the curriculum and ensuring that poetry becomes part of the life experience for both students and teachers.
- To maintain partnerships with organisations outside the sector to build new audiences for poetry, eg working with other cultural institutions, national organisations such as the Canal & River Trust, and connecting with other national events such as through the Look North More Often project.
  - To work with other organisations and agencies to help position contemporary UK poetry in the international context of poets and poetry worldwide, eg by editing the UK domain of Poetry International Web.
  - To promote poetry activities on the Poetry Society website, the Poetry Café bulletin boards, and via social media platforms.

The range of projects and initiatives delivered throughout the year has been impressive. What is evident from the programme is a commitment to both supporting and promoting established poets, but also a passion for engaging and nurturing the next generation of poets and enabling them to find a voice.

### Competitions and Prizes

The Poetry Society's many competitions, prizes and awards provide a way for us to identify, reward and nurture talent in the artform for the public benefit. In the year ahead we will continue to explore ways to offer increased professional benefits to competition winners. In addition to competitions aimed at young people, the Poetry Society ran the following awards:

**National Poetry Competition** - The 2012 competition showed further growth on the previous year's record numbers, attracting 13,041 entries from 5,091 entrants. Participation from outside the UK continued to increase: poems were received from 82 countries worldwide (breaking last year's record of 63). Assessing the entries were judges Vicki Feather, W. N. Herbert and Nick Laird. The £5,000 first prize went to Patricia McCarthy for her haunting poem 'Clothes that escaped the Great War'; the runners up were Jane Draycott for 'Italy to Lord' and John Freeman for 'My Grandfather's Hat'. Seven poets received commendations: Keith Chandler, Pascale Petit, Edward Barker, David Swann, Sally Goldsmith, Stuart Pickford and Robert Stein. We continued to generate new professional opportunities for past winners, and worked with the Poetry School to offer additional benefits to shortlisted entrants.

**The Ted Hughes Award for New Work in Poetry** - Now in its third year, this award established by Carol Ann Duffy, recognises innovation in poetry with a £5,000 prize funded from the honorarium that the Poet Laureate traditionally receives from HM The Queen. The 2012 judges were Maura Dooley, Ian Duhig and Cornelia Parker, who were glad to draw attention to the range and vitality of poetry by focusing on works that were collaborative and which they felt stretched the boundaries of what poetry can achieve. The prize went to Kate Tempest for her work *Brand New Ancients*. Six further poets were shortlisted for the prize Colette Bryce, Roy Fisher, Ruth Padel, Mario Petrucci, Denise Riley and Tamar Yoseloff.

### Publications

**Poetry Review** - Four issues of the magazine were published, edited by our series of Guest Editors. Over the year, we published 218 new poems by 187 poets. Most contributors were making their first appearance in the magazine. We also published 24 original essays, and reviewed 120 books by 39 publishers.

The Summer 2012 issue, 'Mapping the Delta', was guest edited by George Szirtes and included essays by Simon Armitage, Carrie Etter and Daljit Nagra and poems by Paul Batchelor, Julia Copus, Christopher Middleton, A.B. Jackson, Owen Sheers and Geraldine Monk.

The Autumn 2012 issue was guest edited by Charles Boyle and included essays by Patrick McGuinness, Chrissy Williams and Chris McCabe and poems by Tiffany Atkinson, Naomi Foyle, Michael Hofmann, August Kleinzahler, James McGonigal and David Wheatley.

The Winter 2012 issue, 'Offending Frequencies', was edited by Bernardine Evaristo and included essays by Pascale Petit, Ranjit Hoskote, Cherry Smyth and Nii Ayikwei Parkes and poems by Richard Scott, Sophie Mayer, Warsaw Shire, Hannah Lowe, Jay Bernard and Kayo Chingonyi.

The Spring 2013 issue, 'The Anonymous Invitation', was guest edited by Moniza Alvi and Esther Morgan and featured a section wherein the editors and several established poets explore anonymity in poetry and how it

# The Poetry Society (Incorporated)

## Trustees Report

### For the year ended 31 March 2013

interplays with creativity and the artistic spirit. Contributors included Patience Agbabi, Mona Arshi, Judy Brown, Jane Griffiths, Selima Hill, Tim Liardet, Jen Hadfield, Carol Rumens and Julian Stannard.

**Poetry News** – issues were mailed quarterly to all members of the Poetry Society. Edited by Mike Sims, Poetry News commissioned feature articles and news reports from 30-plus writers (journalists and poets). This included interviews with poets Paul Muldoon, Lavinia Greenlaw, Greg Delanty and Tony Harrison, and with publishers Tony Frazer (Shearsman), Helena Nelson (HappenStance) and Peter Brennan and Mario Petrucci (Perdika Press). Contributors included Deryn Rees-Jones, Richard Price, Julia Bird, Michael Horovitz, Katy Evans-Bush, John Haynes, Andy Croft, Helen Mort. Articles included Hannah Lowe on Philip Levine, Allison McVety on the poetry in the language of computing, Richard Scott on poets' librettos and Alison Chisholm on the cento.

Accompanying new work was commissioned from illustrators David Sparshott, James Dawe, Zoe Taylor and James Anderson RE. Each issue carried a members' poems feature, with themes set, and entries selected by different guest poets, including Clive Wilmer, Katrina Naomi, Stephen Knight, and Sarah Corbett. The Members' Poems Prize (the Hamish Canham Prize) went to Joan Michelson.

**Poetry International Web** - We have continued to showcase British poetry on Poetry International Web, where quarterly issues each feature three UK poets with a selection of poems and biographical essays. During this period we showcased 12 poets including: Nick Laird, WN Herbert, Karen McCarthy Woolf, Vicki Feather and Warsan Shire.

### Public Commissions and Projects

The Poetry Society is committed to encouraging the development and production of new poetry in all its forms, creating a space for poetry in the public domain, and exploring the interface of poetry with other artistic disciplines. Our commissioning programme included the following projects.

The Poetry Society has established a successful partnership with the Canal & River Trust, the new charity caring for 2000 miles of canals and rivers across England and Wales. Ian McMillan was commissioned to write a new poem, *Canal Life*, for the Canal & River Trust's launch. A film of McMillan performing the poem was screened extensively, and his poem was chosen for inclusion in the book *Britain's Canals: A national treasure in 100 must-see objects* (pub Coolcanals, 2012). A year-long nationwide poetry programme follows for 2013 with the appointment of Jo Bell as our first Canal Laureate.

In partnership with the Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace, Jo Shapcott and Maurice Riordan were each commissioned to write a new poem in response to Leonardo da Vinci's anatomical drawings. These poems were premiered at a special event at the Queen's Gallery to coincide with the *Leonardo da Vinci: Anatomist* exhibition. Poetry Society members wrote a further 263 poems offering new perspectives on da Vinci's studies and six were published on the gallery's website. The Poetry Society also ran a writing workshop for older teenagers at the Gallery to stimulate more new writing inspired by Leonardo.

To mark 150 years of the London Underground, ITV's news programme 'London Tonight' asked the Poetry Society to commission a poem. The Poetry Society commissioned John Hegley's poem 'Of Mice and Many' which was enthusiastically received, broadcast on ITV and filmed for online distribution.

To mark the Poetry Society Annual Lecture 2012 by Paul Muldoon, the Society designed and published a limited edition letterpress print of Muldoon's tour de force poem 'A Giraffe', signed by the poet and featuring a delightfully witty illustration by the artist John Vernon Lord and printed by Phil Abel of Hand & Eye letterpress studio.

**Exhibitions** – The Poetry Café premiered several new exhibitions which toured through the year including a celebration of Edward Lear's bicentenary; 'Formerly', a collaboration between poet Tamar Yoseloff and photographer Vici MacDonald commemorating forgotten corners of London; and 'Where We Begin to Look. Landscape & Poetry' new paintings and drawings made in the landscape by Zoe Benbow in dialogue with a range of poems by British and American women, chosen by poet Deryn Rees-Jones. Performances and discussions accompanied the shows in the Poetry Café, and venues such as Small World Theatre Cardigan.

**Look North More Often** – 96 thousand people a day – a total of nearly 2.9 million - are estimated to have seen the poem 'The Kindness of Trees' that we commissioned from poet Jackie Kay and displayed around the Christmas Tree in London's Trafalgar Square between the beginning of December and Twelfth Night (footfall figures supplied by Trafalgar Square).

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### Live Events for Public Benefit

**The Annual Lecture** – The multi-award winning poet and poetry editor of the *New Yorker* Paul Muldoon gave the Society's Annual Lecture, *The Word on the Street: Parnassus and Tin Pan Alley* taking as his theme poetry and song lyrics. The lecture was a flagship event at the Southbank Centre's Poetry Parnassus for the Cultural Olympiad. For the second year we also presented the Annual Lecture out of London, this time at the Ledbury Poetry Festival.

**Poetry Review Launches** – We launched the Summer edition of the Review as part of Poetry Parnassus, with readings from Geraldine Monk, A B Jackson and Denise Saul. The Autumn edition of the magazine was launched as part of National Poetry Day Live with readings from Sarah Howe. Keats House provided the launch venue for the Winter edition in January including performances by Warsan Shire, Sophie Mayer and Richard Scott.

**National Poetry Day Live** – For the fourth time the Poetry Society presented a free public event in partnership with Southbank Centre, London, on National Poetry Day, showcasing a wide range of different poetic styles. The event was compared by Roger McGough and a packed audience enjoyed performances from wide range of poets including John Cooper Clarke, Jamal Msebele, Megan Beech, Grace Nichols and Dannie Abse.

**Poetry Festivals** – Our annual National Poetry Competition event at the Ledbury Poetry Festival presented readings from winners Allison McVety, Samantha Wynne-Rhydderch and Zaffar Kunial; while several former winners of our Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award performed at a separate event including Alexandra Cussons, Bryony Harrower and Richard O'Brien; other National Poetry Competition celebratory readings took place at the Cheltenham Literature Festival with readings from the winners alongside an event with Jackie Kay. The Poetry Society also ran stalls at the Free Verse Festival, StAnza Festival St Andrews and Aldeburgh Poetry Festival, where we presented a talk by Michael Rosen about Edward Lear.

**A celebration of Tony Harrison at 75** – We put on a celebratory reading by Tony Harrison at the Southbank Centre, including readings from a lifetime's body of work, to mark the occasion of his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### Education and Work with Young People

**Young Poets Network** – Our newly established online resource for young poets saw a sharp rise in interest. The website, [youngpoetsnetwork.org](http://youngpoetsnetwork.org) received 51,493 visits (including 33,228 unique visitors). The site commissioned workshops and writing challenges from experienced and emerging writers, offering expert advice on subjects such as redrafting poems, setting up a magazine, finding an internship and choosing a university subject.

YPN received over 890 responses to its challenges, and young writers received professional feedback on their work from poets such as Clare Pollard and Karen McCarthy Woolf, as well as in-house advice from the YPN team. We trialled a number of new digital platforms, investigating which methods of interactivity young people most responded to, and offered opportunities to collaborate with other artforms – eg with musicians and photographers. More than 50 young people were selected for publication on the site, and others won trips to events as young reviewers.

Our extensive mapping exercise researched what opportunities were currently available for young people and created an online searchable database. Through this, YPN has put young people in touch with magazines, competitions, internships and other opportunities from over 120 further organisations. YPN has made a substantial difference to the lives of many young writers with recent evaluation showing that because of their involvement with YPN, 77% of young people felt they understood more about poetry; 70% are reading more poetry now and feel more confident writing it; and more than 80% of young people have got involved with another poetry opportunity through YPN. Originally a fixed-term project, the Poetry Society is committed to sustaining YPN, given its overwhelming levels of engagement from young people aged 13-24.

**Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award** - The leading poetry competition for 11-17 year-olds, the Award saw its highest ever number of participants in 2012. 7,215 young people entered the competition – an increase of 2% on last year, and almost triple the number of entrants attracted in 2003 (2,500). Judges Helen Mort and Christopher Reid selected 100 top winners from the 15,047 poems entered. The 15 top winners were Phoebe Stuckes, Naomi Hamilton, Conor McKee, Clare Carlile, Tallulah Hutson, Abigail Setchfield, Emily Burns (USA), Sarah Fletcher, Jessica Kelham-Hohler, Sonja Moore, Jesse Rodrigues (USA), Flora de Falbe, Dillon Leer, Phoebe Boswall and David Carey. Older winners attended a week-long residential writing course at Arvon's The Hurst centre in



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### For the year ended 31 March 2013

February 2013; with younger winners offered school visits and distance mentoring, 24,500 copies of the winners' anthology were distributed to schools and individuals. A new film celebrating the award – featuring the 2013 Arvon course and interviews with former winners – was launched at the end of March 2012.

Professional development opportunities for previous winners included the second annual Foyle reading at Ledbury Poetry Festival in July, performances at National Poetry Day Live in October, the 100 Club, London, in November, the Bush Theatre, London, in December, and an exhibition in the Poetry Café in March; whilst Chloe Maughan and Philip Coales won the places on this year's paid internship programme. An online e-zine, YM:Poetry has given opportunities to former Foyle winners to learn new skills as guest editors of different themed issues. YM: Rebel was edited by Chua Jun Yan and YM: Colour was edited by Phoebe Power.

As part of the Foyle Young Poets programme, three new 'Teacher Trailblazers' were also recognised for their exceptional dedication to the teaching of poetry in schools; Jennifer Krombacher of Chesterton Community College, Cambridge, Richard Robinson, Head of English at the International School of Geneva, Switzerland, and Matthew Edwards of James Allen's Girls School, London. The 'Applauded Schools' scheme offered poet visits to a number of participating schools to reward their continuing commitment and to help develop students' progress. The Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award has been supported by the Foyle Foundation since 2001.

**SLAMBassadors UK** – Our performance championship for young people aged 12-18 started on the 1<sup>st</sup> April with a fantastic event at London's 100 Club, featuring eight national winners. The winners were mentored in an intensive masterclass by poets including alternative hip hop artist and Radio 4 slam winner Dizraeli. The young poets performed new work alongside Chris Preddie OBE and Dizraeli at a packed event which was also filmed for Young Poets Network. Actress and theatre director Fiona Shaw then invited the winners back to London to create pieces for Artichoke's Peace Camp project. The poems were recorded and added to the Peace Camp sound installation.

The 2013 championship began in Buckinghamshire with 20 schools participating in writing and performance workshops (including special schools and a pupil referral unit) culminating in a powerful performance at the Wycombe Swan and publication of a book. The SLAMBassadors programme was run by Joelle Taylor and delivered with the assistance of previous youth winners such as Kayo Chingonyi, Badaboom Tee (Tiana Oldroyd), Aisling Fahey, Hussain Manawer, PACE, Jamal Msebele and NAGA MC all now enjoying successful professional poetry careers. To offer ongoing support for previous SLAMBassadors participants, a new masterclass is run monthly at the Poetry Society followed by performances in the Poetry Café, to maintain the creative and supportive atmosphere of the live slams whilst developing writing skills and sharing opportunities.

Young poets representing SLAMBassadors were invited to participate in many additional activities during the year, including Southbank Centre's Festival of the World Summit: Art will Change the World, where our 'young changemakers' spoke alongside influential speakers such as Camilla Batmanghelidjh, Alain de Botton and Catalyst Rwanda. SLAMBassadors were also showcased in the accompanying Art will Change the World exhibition along the Thames throughout the Olympic summer for which Southbank Centre report 7.4 million visitors.

We also trialed our first Primary slam across schools in Hackney with poets including Francesca Beard, Steve Tasane, PACE, Chris Preddie and Kat Francois, for which we ran 35 workshops for 483 participants, with over a thousand attending performances.

**Schools Network Education Programme** - During the year, members of the education team continued to lead presentations and seminars promoting our Schools Network Education Programme to local authorities, educational institutions and regional and national UK organisations. From May – July 2012 we worked with the Tower Hamlets School Libraries Service to run a performance poetry residency across 8 schools, linked in with our SLAMBassadors championship for young performance poets, which included a twilight INSET and 2 days of workshops in each school.

**Poetryclass** – Our programme supporting best practice in poetry teaching focused this year on developing high quality learning resources for the classroom. With support from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation all the content on the old Poetryclass website was updated and redesigned, and brought into the body of the Poetry Society main site for enhanced accessibility. More than forty revamped teacher resources are now housed on the Poetry Society's website, featuring fresh new designs, easily searchable subjects and key-stage area categories and newly-incorporated photocopiable worksheets for young people to use. The resources have proved very popular on the Poetry Society website, with over 18,000 views since re-launch. Additionally, the Poetry Society is now an official Times Educational Supplement content partner. There are 17 of the Poetry Society's Poetryclass learning resources housed

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on the TES site where they receive many hundreds of uses each month – up to 31st March 2013 these resources have received over 20,000 views and 8,000 downloads (since April 2012). The TES is a digital community of over 2 million registered educationalists and is the world's largest online network of teachers. Our resources have also been shared on the Guardian Teachers Network – a popular site which provides resources and professional development for teachers - and have received over 1,000 downloads to date. We commissioned a series of new Foyle resources launched to coincide with the launch of the 2013 competition; new resources based on poems by Grace Nichols and John Keats for National Poetry Day; and a series of lesson plans supporting the new primary curriculum. Our reputation for producing high quality resources led to us being invited to develop a live online lesson with John Hegley broadcasting for TES on 21 March 2013 for World Poetry Day.

Inset training days offered by the Poetry Society included three sessions in partnership with the University of Cambridge and the Royal Shakespeare Company looking at the performance of poetry to support the Poetry by Heart competition. We also continued to organize poet visits in schools across the country, all the year round.

**Poetry Train** – In a scheme supported by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, the Poetry Society has been piloting new approaches to poetry teaching for trainee teachers. Working closely with teaching staff at training providers, specialised poetry sessions were designed and offered to trainee teachers as part of their courses. Poet Roger Stevens has been working with Roehampton University on the BA Primary Education course, while Poet David Harmer worked on the Primary PGCE course at Bishop Grosseteste University College Lincoln. Five tranches of Poetry Train delivery sessions took place between October 2011 and May 2012. The NFER (National Foundation for Educational Research) evaluated the programme, focusing on four areas: knowledge, teaching (for student teachers), learning (for pupils), enthusiasm and confidence. The findings from this extensive research programme will be disseminated widely, and used to advocate for the value of working with poets to support confident and effective poetry teaching in schools. As the final component of this programme new Esmee Fairbairn funded resources are being developed for Newly Qualified Teachers,

**Cape Farewell: SWITCH** – In January 2013 we launched an exciting new partnership with Cape Farewell, the climate change and art initiative based within the Dana Centre of Science Museum, London. The Poetry Society commissioned Karen McCarthy Woolf to curate the SWITCH website and design a series of four young people's challenges and a teachers resource, encouraging young poets aged 11-18 to write poems responding to Cape Farewell's impressive archive of material. These challenges were housed on the Young Poets Network, and winning poems were selected for a live showcase event in April 2013.

**Disney Junior** - The Poetry Society produced a guide to help parents and carers enjoy poetry with children under seven. This accompanied the Disney animated series 'A Poem is...' featuring favourite poems narrated by actors Matt Smith, David Walliams, Richard Briers and Jessica Hynes, set to moments from some of Disney's classic animations, such as *Alice in Wonderland*, *Cinderella* and *Aladdin*. Poetry Society President Roger McGough fronted an accompanying media campaign on the value of poetry in early years which received a great deal of press attention. McGough delivered the message: "We believe it is important for parents to share poetry with their children at a young age in order to build their foundation for learning to read and present them with a great vehicle for individual expression as they grow older."

**Look North More Often** – Now in its fourth year, our innovative partnership with the Royal Norwegian Embassy is still going strong, we celebrate the arrival of the festive season with new poems around the Christmas Tree in Trafalgar Square.

A programme of poet-visits in twelve primary schools generated a wealth of new poems on the theme of 'friendship'. Participating schools came from six London boroughs (Brent, Islington, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth and Westminster) as well as Immingham in North Lincolnshire, the port where the tree arrives by sea. A team of five poets delivered the workshops: Chrissie Gittins, David Harmer, Joelle Taylor, Cheryl Moskowitz and Coral Rumble. Three children were also flown to Norway with poet Coral Rumble to attend the cutting down ceremony for the tree, with the Mayors of Westminster and Oslo.

Jackie Kay led the next stage of the project, reading all the poems the children had written, and taking inspiration from the children's lines to create a collaborative poem, 'The Kindness of Trees'. The poem explored the idea of the tree as a symbol of friendship between Oslo and London. At the official lighting-up ceremony in Trafalgar Square on 5 December, three children from St Clement Danes C of E Primary School, Westminster braved the cold to

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perform 'The Kindness of Trees' to international dignitaries and the large assembled crowd. This performance was broadcast live around the world, and the collaborative poem was displayed on specially-designed banners around the tree until January.

#### Poetry Café and Poetry Studio

The Poetry Café continued to welcome poetry's many communities in its year-round programme of public events for all ages. Alongside one-off performances and book launches, regular nights included The Shuffle, Fourth Friday, Loose Muse, Survivors Poetry, John Hegley's Elevenses and Exiled Writers Ink. Niall O'Sullivan continued to present Poetry Unplugged, the Café's popular Open Mic night every Tuesday, which offers writers a friendly public platform to try out new material with their peers. Exhibitions reflecting the Society's activities ran throughout the year. The Poetry Studio, upstairs, was the setting for many regular creative writing courses.

#### Membership

Having started the year with a Membership total of 3492, Membership grew during the year to a total of 3552 in March 2013.

Seventy-five Stanza groups were running throughout the year – these are local groups run by members across the UK and Europe. Each group has its own flavour – some regularly staging events and inviting guest performers; some focus on reading; and others sharing and workshopping members' own poems. The Society runs a poetry competition each October for Stanza members. This year's theme was 'Stripes', we received 152 poems from 115 poets and poems were judged by John Siddique. The winner of the 2012 Stanza poetry competition was Angela Stoner (from the Penzance Stanza group).

New member events during the year included quarterly close reading groups for Poetry Review, and regular "Stanza Bonanza" readings bringing together performers from different pairs of stanza groups. A series of Poetry Prescriptions and Poetry Surgeries were organized throughout the year, where aspiring poets have their work critiqued by experienced established poets.

#### Poetry Society Online

The Poetry Society's main website [www.poetrysociety.org.uk](http://www.poetrysociety.org.uk) continues to attract worldwide visitors. Offering free access to compendious poetry information, we gathered daily poetry news stories from the world's media, and published poems, features and educational resources, to deepen public understanding of poetry. We generated a huge amount of new creative digital content, including new films for our YouTube Channel which attracted 41,246 views. Our websites welcomed over half a million unique visitors during the year.

The Poetry Society actively embraces new media to improve our communications with members and enable us to share news and information with the general public. Our Facebook groups saw a massive year-on-year increase and reached 10,728 followers (up from 3,519 last year); a similarly striking success was seen on our Twitter accounts which had 20,481 followers (up from 10,296 the previous year). Through social media we ran a number of participatory poetry projects, such as Sting Like a Bee, where members of the public of all ages documented the sporting action in the Olympics via tweet-sized couplets.

#### Staff

Kate Sayer joined the Society as Education Manager, with Rachel Piercey joining the team as Education Assistant replacing Holly Hopkins. Edward Doegar joined the Society as General Manager in March 2013.

*Poetry Review* had a rotating guest editorship throughout the year as indicated above. Maurice Riordan was recruited to start as the new permanent Editor from April 2013.

Due to timing and resourcing constraints, the Poetry Society operated with a reduced staff team during much of the year. The team was gradually built back up to strength over the months and from January 2013 onwards an expanded staff structure was implemented, allowing for some part-time posts to move to full-time, and the creation of a new General Manager position.

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### The Arts Council

The Poetry Society is an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation. In May 2012 the Poetry Society signed a funding agreement with the Arts Council England at a level of £260K per year (2012-14) rising to £270K per year in 2014-15. In October 2012 an additional agreed uplift in funding of £100K was released by the Arts Council. This additional £100K grant funding per year was also agreed for 2013-14 and 2014-15, conditional upon further agreement of additional national strategic activity. However, through the course of 2012-13 the Arts Council announced in year cuts to all NPOs of 2.08% for 2013-14 and 3.04% for 2014-15.

Along with all other Arts Council National Portfolio Organisations the Poetry Society will need to re-submit an application for continued funding in 2014.

### Other Matters

#### **Risk Management**

During the year the General Council has continued to review the key risks to which the Poetry Society may be exposed, and has implemented systems to manage those risks. A register of risks is maintained.

#### **Reserves**

Overall, unrestricted funds (and cash reserves in particular) still need to be rebuilt over time. The Board of Trustees considers it prudent to retain a small level of funds in order to protect the Poetry Society's current activities and to ensure that it continues to operate on a going concern basis. At the year end the level of unrestricted free reserves, after fixed assets, stood at £77,527 (last year £50,420) (of which £20,000 are designated in a Property Repair Fund). Subject to the rebuilding of those unrestricted free reserves to a more substantial level, the Board's policy is to distribute all of the funds granted to it for specific projects, having made appropriate provision for overhead costs, where eligible.

#### **Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities**

The trustees (who are also directors of the Poetry Society for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charitable company and the group and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and the group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

#### **Audit information**

So far as each of the directors at the time the trustees' report is approved is aware:

- a) there is no relevant information of which the auditors are unaware; and
- b) they have taken all relevant steps they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

The Poetry Society (Incorporated)  
Trustees Report  
For the year ended 31 March 2013

**Accounting and Internal Controls**

The General Council has overall responsibility for ensuring that the charity has appropriate systems of controls, financial and otherwise. It is also responsible for keeping accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position. The General Council is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention of fraud and other irregularities. It has established systems of internal control designed to provide reasonable but not absolute assurance against material misstatement or loss.

These controls include

- a detailed annual budget approved by the General Council
- a delegation of authority and budgetary responsibility to identified staff
- regular reviews of financial reports at General Council Meetings
- appropriate internal controls operated by staff.

**Auditors**

Kingston Smith LLP have indicated their willingness to continue in office and the Trustees have reappointed them to report on the Accounts of the Society for the year to 31 March 2014. A resolution confirming their reappointment will be submitted at the next Annual General Meeting.

**Small Company Rules**

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

This report was approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by:



Sir Stephen Irwin  
Chair



# Independent Auditors' Report to the Members and Trustees of The Poetry Society (Incorporated)

We have audited the financial statements of The Poetry Society for the year ended 31 March 2013 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, the Consolidated and Charity Balance Sheets and the related notes. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and in respect of the consolidated financial statements, to the charities trustees, as a body, in accordance with regulations made under Chapter 3 of Part 8 of the Charities Act 2011. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members and trustees those matters which we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to any party other than the charitable company and charitable company's members as a body and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

## Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Auditors

As explained more fully in the Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view.

We have been appointed auditors under the Companies Act 2006 and Section 151 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with those Acts. Our responsibility is to audit and express an opinion on the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditor (UK and Ireland). Those standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

## Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the charitable company's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the trustees; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition we read all the financial and non-financial information in the Annual Report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements. If we become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies we consider the implications for our report.

## Opinion on the financial statements

In our opinion:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2013 and of the group's incoming/outgoing resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

## Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

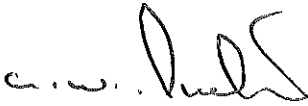
In our opinion the information given in the Trustees' Annual Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

# Independent Auditors' Report to the Members and Trustees of The Poetry Society (Incorporated)

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011 require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the parent charitable company has not kept adequate and sufficient accounting records, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the parent charitable company's financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns;
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies exemption in preparing the Trustees' Annual Report.



Cliff Ireton  
Senior Statutory Auditor  
for and on behalf of Kingston Smith LLP, Statutory Auditor  
Date: 29 October 2013

141 Wardour Street  
London  
W1F 0UT

Kingston Smith LLP is eligible to act as auditor in terms of Section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.