



**BLACK
COUNTRY
TOURING**

ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

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CHAIR'S STATEMENT



TIM RUSHBY

Chair

The beginning of a new era for Black Country Touring

2023/24 marked a transformative year for Black Country Touring, as we proudly celebrated 25 years of bringing the arts to life across the region. It was a year not only of reflection but of remarkable growth and success, expanding our reach and deepening our impact. Thanks to the support of our funders, we are now able to work with more community partners, artists, and volunteers than ever before, strengthening our role at the heart of the Black Country's cultural landscape, fostering lasting connections, and broadening access to the arts in exciting new ways.

In times like these, when the arts are often seen as a luxury, we want to emphasise that they are far from it. The arts are not just a 'nice to have'—they are a necessity. Participation in the arts enhances people's lives, wellbeing, and outlook, contributing to a healthier, more empathetic society. We remain committed to ensuring everyone has access to the arts regardless of socio-economic barriers.

During the run-up to the new National Portfolio Organisation round of Arts Council funding, we developed our **Unbordered** strategy for 2023-26, reaffirming BCT's mission to bring people and communities together through theatre, dance, and film. As we moved from concept to delivery, this programme has only become more relevant to the world we live in today. Our programme addresses the pressing challenges of increasingly polarised politics, divisions within and between communities, and a cost of living crisis that weighs heavily on the already underfunded and deprived areas of the country in which we work. We want to unite people, foster empathy, and celebrate the rich tapestry of cultures that make the Black Country a vibrant and dynamic region.

We were thrilled to receive a 110% uplift in funding from Arts Council England (ACE) and rejoin their portfolio for 2023-2027. This significant increase allows the charity to work more deeply with community groups, partners, artists, and community champions. It also puts it on firmer financial ground, allowing us to cover core costs better and strengthen our team. This uplift was further supported by the **Esmée Fairbairn Foundation**, which has provided core funding over the past three years, including a **What's in Store** project grant and digital work during the pandemic.

We also acknowledge the incredible backing of **The Players of the People's Postcode Lottery**, whose three-year flexible funding has been transformative. Their support has enhanced our work with communities and helped us buffer against the rising costs due to the cost of living crisis. This unprecedented financial support from three organisations has released untapped potential within BCT, enhancing our impact, fundraising capacity, and artistic ambition after years of standstill funding. It helped us realise what could be possible with greater long-term investment in the charity. It has also allowed us to trial new initiatives, such as Pay What You Can ticketing, which has enabled people to attend BCT events during a time when many are forced to make difficult financial decisions.

ACE's funding uplift recognises the value of our ambitious plans in, and for, the Black Country. We are delighted to see many other Black Country-based arts organisations benefiting from increased investment in the region. From our work in communities, we know there is no shortage of appetite or enthusiasm for the arts here - there is an abundance. For too long, our communities have been underserved, overlooked, or excluded due to a lack of investment, discrimination, and elitism. The Arts Council's **Let's Create** strategy gave us renewed optimism as it aligns so closely with the mission and values that BCT has embodied for the past 25 years, emphasising creativity at all stages of life and expanding access across England.

In October 2023, we celebrated our quarter-century milestone with a performance at one of our most beloved and successful venues—Thimblemill Library, which we now proudly call

home. Rather than hosting a closed event, we invited friends of the company, supporters, and local audiences to join us in experiencing the joyous **Mountain Music** by Little Bulb Theatre and Farnham Maltings, accompanied by a samosa or two. It was a fitting celebration of our journey and the community that has supported us.



I want to express my sincere gratitude to **Sandwell Council** and **Wolverhampton City Council** for their continued support of Black Country Touring, even amidst the increasing financial pressures faced by local authorities. Their commitment to the transformative impact of the arts is vital in making their boroughs better places to live.

This year, we also undertook a successful board recruitment drive, which led to the addition of five new members to our management committee. These new appointments bring a wealth of skills, diverse perspectives, and fresh ideas to ensure Black Country Touring continues to be guided and supported in its mission. Their varied backgrounds reflect the diversity of the communities we serve, and their expertise will be invaluable as we work to achieve our strategic aims and navigate the challenges ahead.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank members of the board, new and established, for their continued commitment to BCT, and their energy, passion and enthusiasm for all we do. However, my greatest thanks must go to our hugely dedicated and highly skilled team, our promoters - the essential local champions and heroes that without whom we wouldn't be able to deliver large parts of our programme, and our brilliantly talented associate artists. Thank you for delivering a programme of such quality, reach and excellence over the past 12 months. The strong artistic and financial position we find ourselves in today is a testament to your brilliance and hard work. I firmly believe that the Black Country and its people would be poorer without BCT, and each of you should be proud of the thousands of experiences we help make happen each year right across the region.



TIMOTHY RUSHBY
Chair, Black Country Touring





ABOUT US

Black Country Touring (BCT) produces and promotes high-quality theatre, dance and film in the Black Country, putting local communities at the heart of everything we do.

VISION

Our vision is of a Black Country where everyone has the opportunity to experience captivating, inspiring and diverse performances in their community, regardless of age, background or income.

MISSION

We believe the arts have the potential to change lives by allowing us to see new possibilities, develop new skills and provide opportunities to reflect on our own lives, communities and the wider world.

We work with people across the Black Country to select and present the very best available artists and companies to our local communities.

We endeavour to make our work accessible to, and reflective of, the diverse communities that make up the Black Country.

We collaborate with artists and local people to create new work born out of contemporary Black Country stories for both local and national audiences.



The Sleeping Seeds by Fox & Rocha as part of Where We Grow

OUR WORK

All of BCT's work is focused on creating opportunities for local people to experience theatre, dance and film. They are actively involved in programming, promoting and creating performances, events and festivals. We achieve this through two strands:

TOURING

- **Community Promoters:** Supporting local volunteers working in their community to select and promote touring theatre, dance and film in accessible and friendly neighbourhood venues such as community centres and libraries
- **Young Promoters:** Schoolchildren and young people aged from 5 – 18 in mainstream and SEN education transform their school or college into a venue for a touring production, learning the skills required to run a theatre venue
- **Community Cinema:** We support local people and venues to bring an immersive cinema experience to their community. The focus is on bringing people together to enjoy the magic of film, programming everything from sing-alongs to documentaries

PRODUCING

- **Original Productions:** Site-specific theatre productions that reflect the cultural diversity and the lived experiences of Black Country people - their histories, origins, memories, interests, hopes and aspirations
- **Digital projects:** Podcasts and film projects that amplify the voices of Black Country people and shine a light on their stories and lived experiences

YEAR AT A GLANCE: KEY DATA

BCT's commitment to inclusion and engagement has been at the heart of our work throughout 2023-24. We exceeded all of our demographic targets, with over 29.1% of our audience from ethnically diverse backgrounds and 61.9% from the most deprived areas of the Black Country. 23.9% identified as having a disability.

Initiatives such as Pay What You Can ticketing and accessible programming in libraries and community spaces ensure that our work reaches those who might otherwise face barriers to cultural participation.



15,313

Total Audiences

240

Total Events

29.1%

Ethnically Diverse
Audience

23.9%

D/deaf and Disabled
Audiences

61.9%

of audiences are from
the most deprived third
of postcodes

£421,000

of investment secured
for our work across the
Black Country



TOURING & COMMUNITY CINEMA

TOURING HIGHLIGHTS

This year BCT's touring programmes expanded, reaching new audiences across the Black Country with thought-provoking and entertaining performances. As the cost of living crisis deepened, we worked closely with our Community Promoters and partners to ensure the arts remained affordable and accessible to all.





“Absolutely cracking show. Beautifully written, performed, executed and the design had loads of delights and surprises.”

*The Toymaker
by Infamous Arts*



*Laika the Space Dog
by Lori Hopkins*

“A great show, very funny and a lovely way to spend an hour during half term. Thanks for the laughs!”



“Lovely performance! My children loved it and got involved. The educational message was well done. Thank you!”

Peter Chand – Storyteller

The Zoo That Comes to You by Scarlet Oak Theatre



Special Delivery by A Bird in the Hand Theatre

REKINDLE LIBRARIES PROJECT

Rekindle, a three-year project funded by Arts Council England and led by Creative Arts East, is a nationwide initiative pairing five arts organisations with their local library services.

As a part of Rekindle, BCT are collaborating with Sandwell Library Service to bring more creativity and culture into five Sandwell Libraries: **Smethwick Library, Central Library, Wednesbury Library, Tipton Library** and **Blackheath Library**. As well as programming more performances and workshops into libraries, we are working with library staff to build their skills and confidence in making exciting events happen in their library.

In 2023-24, Rekindle delivered 10 shows and workshops across multiple libraries, with performances aimed at both adult and family audiences. Key highlights included LGBTQ+ themed shows and family performances during the October half-term.

Library staff have been supported with marketing and event management training, building their capacity to continue programming diverse and engaging cultural events. The project not only brought arts into community spaces but also fostered long-term relationships between libraries and their audiences.



COMMUNITY CINEMA

The Community Cinema project remains crucial in bringing independent and international cinema to local communities. At the beginning of 2023, we entered into a three-year strategic partnership with **Film Hub Midlands** to expand the reach of the project in the Black Country, to establish 4-5 new community cinema groups in the Black Country.

This year, venues such as **Brushstrokes (Smethwick)**, **Wesley Centre (Wednesbury)** and **Rowley Regis Disability Centre** continued to host regular screenings, offering films from diverse cultural perspectives, including Iranian, Japanese, Bhutanese and Ukrainian cinema. Rowley Regis Disability Centre secured additional funding to continue its programme reflecting the growing demand for community-led cinema events. These screenings provided more than just entertainment; they became focal points for community cohesion, offering a space for dialogue and reflection through post-film discussions and Q&A sessions with filmmakers.

We also initiated new community cinema programmes with **Gatis Community Space** and **Beacon Centre for the Blind** in Wolverhampton.



WEDNESBURY DAY

In June 2023, BCT, Multistory, and We Are Wednesbury transformed Wednesbury with two lively Saturdays of Wednesbury Day festivities. Families enjoyed interactive street games by **Autin Dance Theatre**, comedic walkabouts from **Curious Cargo's "Lollipop Ladies"** and **Crow's Nest Theatre's** heartwarming family show, "Is That a Yeti, Hetty?"

On June 17th, the town centre buzzed with excitement as a 13-foot sea giant puppet led a community parade, concluding in **Autin Dance Theatre's** spectacular **Out of the Deep Blue**. Market Square and High Street came alive with playful puppet shows, mischievous **"Pigeons"** by **Circii**, and the vibrant beats of the **Rajasthan Heritage Brass Band**.

Wednesbury Day was part of the We Are Wednesbury programme, supported by Sandwell Council and Historic England's High Streets Heritage Action Zones scheme.



*'Out of the Deep Blue'
by Autin Dance Theatre*



SMETHWICK PUPPETRY FESTIVAL

In February 2024, BCT launched the first Smethwick Puppetry Festival, a week-long celebration of puppet theatre. Spread across seven community venues, the festival featured 15 performances, including shows for families and adults, and several participatory workshops. The festival's unique approach combined traditional puppetry with modern themes, such as environmental sustainability, the impact of dementia on families and families and even space exploration, in performances like **SeedHeart**, **I'm Glad I Asked**, and **Laika the Space Dog**.

One of the festival's key successes was its commitment to accessibility. All events were pay-what-you-can, making the festival affordable for all, with a suggested donation of just £3 per ticket. We also launched our 'access kits' for venues, which feature a variety of tools to make performances more relaxed and enjoyable for all.

In all, over 1,000 people attended shows and many sold out in advance; the festival also garnered significant community support, raising over £1,500 from donations and receiving an additional £4,500 in partner contributions. We are grateful to **The Players of the People's Postcode Lottery**, **Arts Council England** and **Sandwell Council**, including **West Smethwick Park Pavillion** and **Sandwell Libraries**, for their support of the programme.

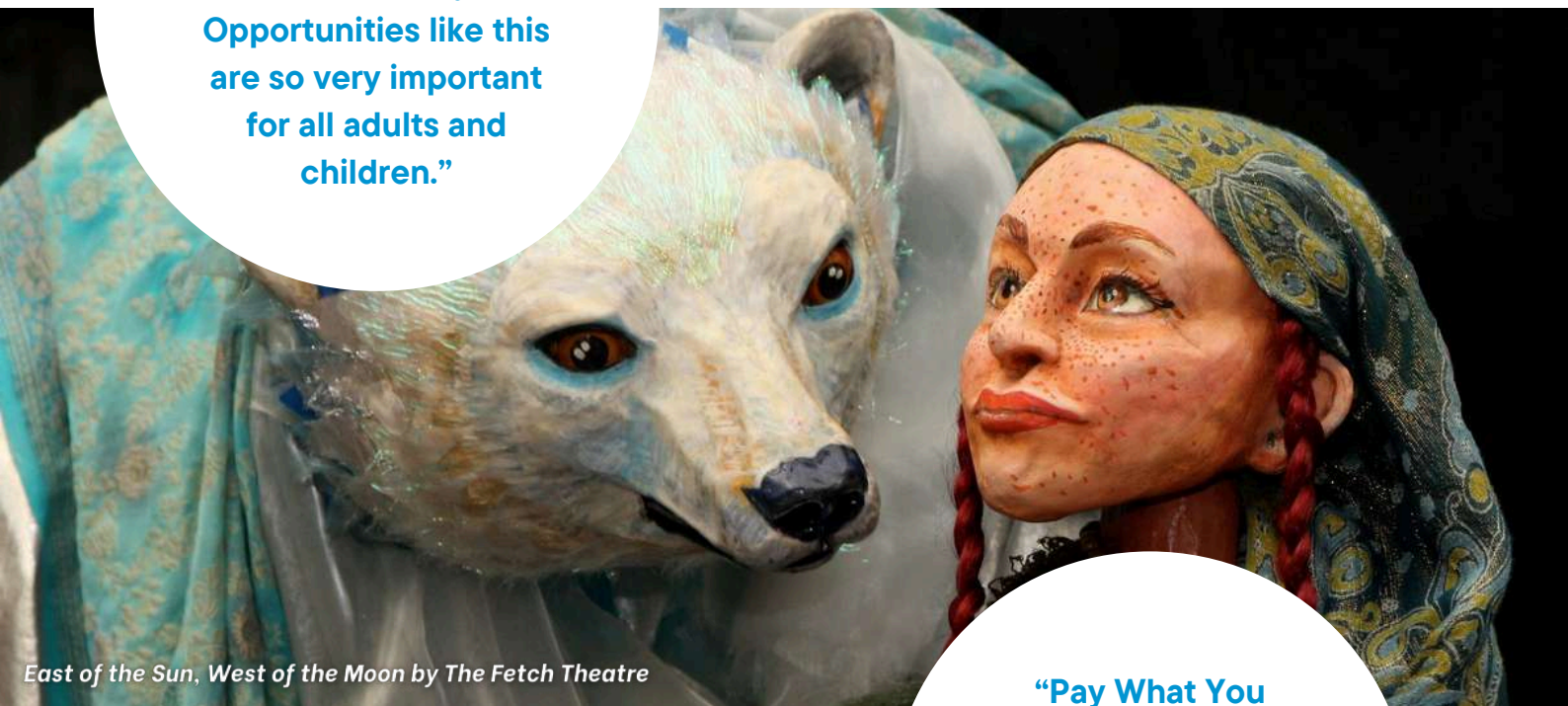
The overwhelmingly positive response from audiences, partners, and promoters makes it likely that this event will become a regular feature of BCT's calendar and reinforces the importance of providing diverse cultural experiences within accessible community settings. Plans are already in place to expand the festival for 2025, ensuring that it becomes a key cultural event that Smethwick can be proud of.



“Great having local events and making good use of community spaces, especially during half term!”

“Educational, uplifting and fun! Such a treat for the whole family. Opportunities like this are so very important for all adults and children.”

Pixiematosis by the Object Project



East of the Sun, West of the Moon by The Fetch Theatre

“Pay What You Can was useful due to current job issues and not being sure if we'd make it. We were able to donate on the door.”



Insect Safari by The Fetch Theatre

PRODUCTIONS & PROJECTS

WHERE WE GROW

Our production *Where We Grow* celebrated community gardens and the people who maintain them. This project spanned three months and culminated in four performance days in September 2023, bringing live performances to four community gardens across the Black Country: **Caldmore Community Gardens**, the **Dorothy Parkes Centre plot at Bearwood Allotments**, **Hawbush Gardens** in Brierley Hill, and **Gatis Community Space** in Wolverhampton. The performances explored nature, community, and resilience themes through theatre, poetry, storytelling, and music.

The collaboration between eight local artists, musician Katy Rose Bennett and the communities that inspired them made this project particularly impactful. The artists paired up and spent time in the gardens, gathering stories from volunteers and visitors, and created bespoke performances that were deeply connected to the unique characteristics of each space. Importantly, all performances were BSL-interpreted, ensuring accessibility for D/deaf audiences. With over 670 attendees, the project received glowing feedback, especially from audience members who had not previously engaged with live theatre.

Audience comments such as **"It grounded me today, which I needed"** and **"Absolutely mesmerising"** reflect the emotional and personal resonance of the performances. This project exemplifies BCT's ethos of creating big ideas in small spaces, fostering local pride and connection through the arts.

The process and spaces have informed the development of *Wild*, BCT's 2024 touring production.





“Excellent show. Something for everyone. Lots of local stories and accessibility for those who need it (hearing impaired)”

“Absolutely mesmerising. Every performance was wonderful and made me emotional.”



Rochi Rampal



Katy Rose Bennett

“The space, the variety and the subject was perfect. It grounded me today which I needed.”



Adrian B. Earle & Sophina Jagot



Bohdan Piasecki



A SPANNER IN THE WORKS

at Black Country Living Museum

Black Country Touring created a new short production called *A Spanner in the Works* as part of the Black Country Living Museum's Summer Lates programme in August 2023. It featured 25 performances over 5 Fridays in August and the first week of September. It continues our longstanding partnership with the museum, where we use the incredible historical settings to explore the region's heritage in a way that connects with contemporary audiences.

A Spanner in the Works was based on original research undertaken by Vimal Korpai for Black Country Touring. It was inspired by the stories

given to us in interviews with bus drivers and conductors who worked on local buses in the 1960s and by the events of the time, including the Wolverhampton bus drivers' turban dispute, the Enoch Powell rivers of blood speech and West Bromwich Albion winning the FA cup.

Two of the performers - Vimal Korpai and Jack Trow - also had strong personal connections to the subject matter. Vimal's dad moved to the region from Punjab and spent many years driving local buses here, and Jack's grandad worked in the bus garage for West Bromwich Corporation.



“Well performed, very enjoyable. Brought back memories of the 60s”

Vimal Korpai & Anjeela Wakil

“I didn’t expect it to be so political. I’m glad it was. Issues need to be addressed. Well presented. Well done.”



Amit Persaud & Vimal Korpai

“Thank you for representing my family’s history!”



Jack Trow & Vimal Korpai

WHERE ARE YOU?

Schools Tour

Where Are You? was developed in collaboration with **Accra Theatre Workshop** in Ghana, is a hybrid theatre production for families, featuring a mix of live performance, pre-recorded performance and animation. It tells the story of two penpals, Rochi in Bearwood (UK) and Abena in Dzorwulu (Ghana), who embark on a perilous journey across land, mountains and sea, courting danger and adventure in order to meet each other in the middle.

Where Are You? was originally presented by the **Birmingham 2022 Festival**, and debuted in June 2022 at Bear Bookshop in Bearwood and J-CLU School of Arts in Accra, Ghana as a part of our **What's In Store** project.

From November to December 2023, the production toured to five schools across Sandwell, Dudley, Wolverhampton and Walsall. Each school in the UK was paired with a school or children's centre in Accra, Ghana, with the performances taking place simultaneously at both locations, connected via a live stream.

480 children across both countries attended the show and had the opportunity to learn about each other's country and culture.



“Where Are You?’ was such a unique piece of work. The children seemed to love all elements. The way they talked about the story book alone; the animated gasps when elements of that story burst into life on screen in front of them in their own school hall; their fizzy-pop excitement when they got to meet and talk with children they’d never met before, thousands of miles away on another continent - that was all brilliant and a privilege to be a part of!”

— Rochi Rampal, performer

DIGITAL DEVELOPMENTS

BCT continued its journey into creating immersive and inclusive digital media this year, particularly through the Blathering with SVI Podcast and the Sanctuary in Sandwell short films.

These projects were released in Spring/Summer 2024, with much of the development in this financial year.



BLATHERING WITH SVI

This podcast series, a collaboration with Sandwell Visually Impaired (SVI) and artist Graeme Rose, delves into topics relevant to the visually impaired community, exploring their daily experiences - the highs and the lows - in their own words. Over several months, SVI members discussed everyday subjects with Graeme Rose, reflecting on how vision impacts their perception of colour, dreams, and water. How does sight loss reshape these relationships? What if you've never seen at all?

These conversations are captured in three engaging episodes, each enriched with an evocative soundscape by Think/Write/Fly (Adrian B. Earle).

Listen via the QR code below:



SANCTUARY IN SANDWELL

Black Country Touring, Bearwood Community Hub, and Borough of Sanctuary Sandwell have created four short films to counter negative migration narratives and inspire empathy by sharing real stories from sanctuary seekers who've made Sandwell their home.

The films feature Forward Poetry Prize-winner Bohdan Piasecki as he talks with four locals—Sozan, Jose, Ali, and Lazo—about their journeys to the UK. Within 24 hours, Bohdan crafts and performs a poem inspired by each story.

The project resulted in four powerful films and poems. Thanks to The Space for their support.

Watch via the QR code below:



LOOKING FORWARD

The future holds exciting opportunities for BCT. With the successful launch of new projects like the Smethwick Puppetry Festival, the ongoing success of our productions, and expanding partnerships in the digital sphere, we are poised to continue making a meaningful impact in 2024 and beyond. We will remain focused on ensuring the arts are accessible, inclusive, and relevant to all communities in the Black Country.

WILD

Sprouting from Where We Grow is **Wild** - a new theatre production celebrating what Wild means to us: in the natural world, in our cities and within ourselves. With an ensemble cast, community choir, rich soundscapes and live music it invites the audience to reflect on their own definitions of 'wild', fostering a deeper appreciation of both nature and human nature.

Following a deep engagement period with community gardens and groups, the show toured the Black Country in October 2024.



THE SLEEPING SEEDS

Another development from Where We Grow is **The Sleeping Seeds** by Smethwick-based artists **Fox & Rocha**.

Originally devised as a family friendly, 15 minute musical performance as part of our Summer production, in 2024 it was expanded into a full touring production courtesy of the artists and Curiosity Productions, with support from BCT and Director Steve Johnstone.

SMETHWICK ARTS

In 2024, BCT will work with a consortium of 10 community venues and local arts organisations **The Parakeet** and **Spectra** to pilot a pioneering new approach to collective arts programming.

Based on the idea of devolving an arts centre offer across multiple venues in a town, it will expand and amplify arts programming across Smethwick, encourage people to travel to venues they've not been to before and deliver a well-rounded, accessible and intensive programme of performances, workshops,, creative stay and play for families and opportunities to be creative.

TRUSTEES & TEAM

TRUSTEES

Timothy Rushby	Chair
Imtiaz Dungarwalla	Vice Chair
Akila McLean	
Anna Webster	
Carla Priddon	
Emma Worrall	
Julie McKirdy	
Michelle Bould	
Rachael Magson	
Rupinder Sandhu	

BLACK COUNTRY TOURING TEAM

Frances Land	Co-Artistic Director
Steve Johnstone	Co-Artistic Director
Matt Andrews	Development Director
Corinne Morris	General Manager
Natalie Kidman	Promoter Manager
Sampira Al-Fihri	Creative Producer
Amrit Kaur Juss	Marketing & Communications Coordinator
Donna Clarkson	Community Programme Coordinator
Laura Leech	Administration & Projects Assistant
Olivia James	Community Cinema Coordinator (Freelance)
Suki Sohi	Community Cinema Coordinator (joined June 2024)



FUNDERS & SUPPORTERS

Black Country Touring relies on the dedication of our local volunteers and venues. Without their endless enthusiasm for their communities and the arts, our work would not be possible. We are also grateful to all of the individual donors who have supported our work this year.



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Black Country Touring
c/o Thimblemill Library
Thimblemill Road
Smethwick
West Midlands
B67 5RJ

Charity No: 1080608
Company No: 3446320

Black Country Touring is an Arts Council
England National Portfolio Organisation.



**BLACK
COUNTRY
TOURING**

www.bctouring.org.uk

Company registration number: 3446320

Charity registration number: 1080608

Black Country Touring

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Bissell & Brown Birmingham Limited
12 Portman Rd, Kings Heath
Birmingham
B13 0SL

Black Country Touring

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Black Country Touring

Trustees' Report

The trustees, who are directors for the purposes of company law, present the annual report together with the financial statements of the charitable company for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Structure, governance and management

Nature of governing document

The company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. It is governed by Memorandum and Articles of Association and was incorporated on 8th October 1997. It was registered as a Charity on 8th May 2000.

Organisational structure

Chief Executives & Co-Artistic directors : Steve Johnstone & Frances Johnstone
Company Secretary: Frances Johnstone
Development Director: Matthew Andrews
General Manager: Corinne Morris
Promotion Manager: Natalie Kidman
Creative Producer: Sampira Al-Fihri
Marketing Co-ordinator: Amrit Kaur Juss
Community Programme Coordinators: Donna Clarkson, Suki Sohi
Administrator: Laura Leech

Recruitment and appointment of trustees

Recruitment and Appointment of New Trustees

1 Members of the Committee will be invited on the basis of their working expertise and experience, and/or their background and other experiences and skills. The committee as a whole will aim to reflect the broad make-up and cultural diversity of the Black Country and the West Midlands.

2 As a general rule, there should be a relationship between the Company and a person proposed for Committee membership. The person proposed should know something of Black Country Touring's work. This criterion does not apply to people offering specific skills.

3 The time limits for membership laid down in the constitution should be applied consciously, rather than renewing automatically.

4 There should be a provision for new members to be brought on for a fixed term of one or two years in the first instance, with the possibility of extension to full membership, after review. (Co-options for specific projects or developments are already laid down in the constitution)

In applying these criteria Black Country Touring will take a pro-active approach in fully operating its policy of equal opportunities.

Induction and training of trustees

All proposed new members must be provided with an induction pack and have a formal discussion with a member of the Company's staff, before their final approval by the Committee.

These guidelines run alongside the terms of Black Country Touring's Articles of Association.

Black Country Touring

Trustees' Report

Objectives and activities

Public benefit

In the exercise of their powers as charity trustees, they have had due regard to the published guidance from the Charity Commission on the operation of the public benefit requirement, and the aims of the charity are carried out for the public benefit.

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements of section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

Objects and aims

The objects of the Company are to promote, maintain, improve and advance the education of the public by the encouragement and practice of the arts, by fostering and promoting for the benefit of the public the improvement and development of artistic knowledge, taste, understanding, and application of the arts and in particular but not exclusively, to provide arts based activities and encourage participation by all sections of the community in such activities in the Wolverhampton, Walsall, Dudley and Sandwell Metropolitan Boroughs and their environs.

Trustees and officers

The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Trustees:	Timothy Rushby
	Imtiaz Dungarwalla
	Carla Priddon
	Julie McKirdy
	Akila Mclean
	Rachael Magson (appointed 18 April 2023)
	Rupinder Sandhu (appointed 10 April 2023)
	Michelle Bould (appointed 10 October 2023)
	Anna Webster (appointed 10 October 2023)
	Emma Worrall (appointed 10 October 2023)
	Paul Reece (Resigned 1 June 2023)

Achievements and performance

Please refer to the attached Annual Review for 2023/2024

Financial review

Please refer to the attached Annual Review for 2023/2024

Black Country Touring

Trustees' Report

Policy on reserves

The income and expenditure of the charity fluctuates according to the pattern of grant and project income secured. As the Charity employs a number of staff, the Management Committee (Trustees) consider that reserves are needed to provide for an orderly wind-down in the event of an unexpected reduction in the funds secured. The Charity is also required on occasion to incur the costs of developing and researching work before the grants which have been awarded, and other income, are actually received. The Charity therefore needs a level of reserves for cash flow reasons. In the opinion of the Management Committee the reserves of the Charity are appropriate for its scale of operation.

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Registration Number: 1080608

Company Registration Number: 3446320

The charity is incorporated in England and Wales.

Registered Office: Thimblemill Library
Thimblemill Rd
Smethwick
B67 5RJ

Principal Office: Thimblemill Library
Thimblemill Rd
Smethwick
B67 5RJ

Independent Examiner: Bissell & Brown Birmingham Limited
12 Portman Rd, Kings Heath
Birmingham
B13 0SL

Bankers: The Co-operative Bank

The annual report was approved by the trustees of the charity on 12/11/24 and signed on its behalf by:



Timothy Rushby
Trustee

Black Country Touring

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of Black Country Touring 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), including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland".

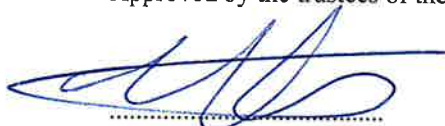
Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards, comprising FRS 102 have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- 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 can 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 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 charitable company's website. Legislation governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by the trustees of the charity on 12/11/24 and signed on its behalf by:



Timothy Rushby
Trustee

Black Country Touring

Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of Black Country Touring ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

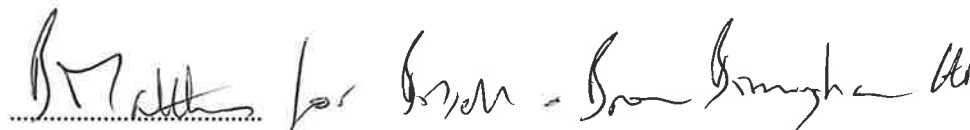
Independent examiner's statement

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of Bissell & Brown Birmingham Ltd, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of Black Country Touring as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities [applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)].

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



B J Matthews, FCA
Bissell & Brown Birmingham Ltd
12 Portman Rd, Kings Heath
Birmingham
B13 0SL

12 November 2024

Black Country Touring

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2024 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Income and Endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	2	659	-	659	196
Charitable activities	15	474,163	75,000	549,163	474,366
Other income		754	-	754	146
Total Income		475,576	75,000	550,576	474,708
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	13	(452,627)	(103,634)	(556,261)	(474,059)
Total Expenditure		(452,627)	(103,634)	(556,261)	(474,059)
Net income/(expenditure)		22,949	(28,634)	(5,685)	649
Net movement in funds		22,949	(28,634)	(5,685)	649
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		92,806	98,634	191,440	190,790
Total funds carried forward	9	115,755	70,000	185,755	191,439

All of the charity's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two periods.

The notes on pages 8 to 13 form an integral part of these financial statements.

Black Country Touring

(Registration number: 3446320)
Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024


	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	4	-	882
Current assets			
Debtors	5	16,651	21,391
Cash at bank and in hand	6	<u>176,319</u>	<u>175,307</u>
		192,970	196,698
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	7	<u>(7,215)</u>	<u>(6,141)</u>
Net current assets		<u>185,755</u>	<u>190,557</u>
Net assets		<u>185,755</u>	<u>191,439</u>
Funds of the charity:			
Restricted income funds			
Restricted funds	9	70,000	98,634
Unrestricted income funds			
Unrestricted funds		<u>115,755</u>	<u>92,805</u>
Total funds	9	<u>185,755</u>	<u>191,439</u>

For the financial year ending 31 March 2024 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- The members have not required the charity to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476; and
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The financial statements on pages 6 to 13 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on 12/11/24 and signed on their behalf by:


.....
Timothy Rushby
Trustee

The notes on page: 8 to 13 form an integral part of these financial statements.

Black Country Touring

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

1 Accounting policies

Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting estimates

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Statement of compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)) (issued in October 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Basis of preparation

Black Country Touring meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Going concern

The Trustees have considered budgets and cash flow forecasts through to November 2025, and the level of post year-end support received from Arts Council England. On this basis, the trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern nor any significant areas of uncertainty that affect the carrying value of assets held by the charity.

Income and endowments

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of the income receivable can be measured reliably.

Donations and legacies

Donations are recognised when the charity has been notified in writing of both the amount and settlement date. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance by the charity before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charity and it is probable that these conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Expenditure

All expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to that expenditure, it is probable settlement is required and the amount can be measured reliably. All costs are allocated to the applicable expenditure heading that aggregate similar costs to that category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources, with central staff costs allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use. Other support costs are allocated based on the spread of staff costs.

Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Black Country Touring

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Taxation

The charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £500.00 or more are initially recorded at cost, less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets so as to write off the cost or valuation, less any estimated residual value, over their expected useful economic life as follows:

Asset class	Depreciation method and rate
Equipment	33.33% straight-line

Fund structure

Unrestricted income funds are general funds that are available for use at the trustees' discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the charity.

Restricted income funds are those donated for use in a particular area or for specific purposes, the use of which is restricted to that area or purpose.

Black Country Touring

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

2 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Donations and legacies;			
Donations from individuals	259	259	196
Trusts and foundations	400	400	-
	<u>659</u>	<u>659</u>	<u>196</u>
			Total 2024 £
		Note	

4 Tangible fixed assets

	Furniture and equipment £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 April 2023	24,105	24,105
At 31 March 2024	24,105	24,105
Depreciation		
At 1 April 2023	23,223	23,223
Charge for the year	882	882
At 31 March 2024	24,105	24,105
Net book value		
At 31 March 2024	-	-
At 31 March 2023	882	882

5 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	16,651	13,391
Other debtors	-	8,000
	<u>16,651</u>	<u>21,391</u>

6 Cash and cash equivalents

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash at bank	176,319	175,307

Black Country Touring

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

7 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Other taxation and social security	5,515	4,441
Accruals	1,700	1,700
	<u>7,215</u>	<u>6,141</u>

8 Charity status

The charity is limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales, and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the trustees is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the charity in the event of liquidation.

The principal place of business is:

Thimblemill Library
Thimblemill Rd
Smethwick
B67 5RJ

9 Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Unrestricted funds					
<i>General</i>					
General unrestricted	77,633	475,576	(452,626)	(4,828)	95,755
<i>Designated</i>					
Development reserve	15,172	-	-	(15,172)	-
Arts Council NPO Projects	-	-	-	20,000	20,000
	<u>15,172</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,828</u>	<u>20,000</u>
Total unrestricted funds	<u>92,805</u>	<u>475,576</u>	<u>(452,626)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>115,755</u>
Restricted funds					
Esme Fairbairn	30,134	-	(30,134)	-	-
D'Oyly Carte	3,500	-	(3,500)	-	-
Saintbury	3,000	-	(3,000)	-	-
The Postcode Lottery	62,000	75,000	(67,000)	-	70,000
Total restricted funds	<u>98,634</u>	<u>75,000</u>	<u>(103,634)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>70,000</u>
Total funds	<u>191,439</u>	<u>550,576</u>	<u>(556,260)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>185,755</u>

Black Country Touring

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

10 Net incoming/outgoing resources

Net (outgoing)/incoming resources for the year include:

2024
£

11 Staff costs

The monthly average number of persons (including senior management / leadership team) employed by the charity during the year expressed as full time equivalents was as follows:

	2024 No	2023 No
Staff	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 during the year.

12 Trustees remuneration and expenses

No trustees, nor any persons connected with them, have received any remuneration from the charity during the year.

No trustees have received any reimbursed expenses from the charity during the year.

13 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Black Country Cinema cost	20,349	3,300	23,649	29,488
Productions & performances	97,867	54,200	152,067	115,729
Artistic directors	48,252	-	48,252	45,317
Marketing & publicity	15,194	-	15,194	7,863
Travelling & subsistence	2,979	-	2,979	1,956
Salaries & employers NI & pension	196,092	46,134	242,226	169,804
Doubtful debts	12,976	-	12,976	-
Training	3,886	-	3,886	3,149
Insurance	1,162	-	1,162	1,763
Rent	9,000	-	9,000	7,042
Computer/ network	784	-	784	2,309

Black Country Touring

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Printing, postage & stationery	-	-	-	2,030
Shows & performances	19,701	-	19,701	73,832
Telephone	-	-	-	300
Independent examination	1,700	-	1,700	1,766
Subscriptions	2,103	-	2,103	2,174
Equipment & replacements	10,760	-	10,760	-
Other costs	8,855	-	8,855	7,238
Bank charges	85	-	85	67
Removal costs	-	-	-	1,791
Depreciation	882	-	882	441
	<u>452,627</u>	<u>103,634</u>	<u>556,261</u>	<u>474,059</u>

14 Taxation

The charity is a registered charity and is therefore exempt from taxation.

15 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Arts Council core grant	307,225	-	307,225	146,137
Local authorities project income	24,224	-	24,224	26,332
Programme projects and production income	20,057	-	20,057	-
Fees and shows	99,709	-	99,709	143,002
BFI - Black Country Community Cinema	-	-	-	26,902
Esmee Fairbairn	-	-	-	44,000
Post Code Lottery	-	75,000	75,000	75,000
Black Country Living Museum	22,948	-	22,948	-
Saintbury Trust	-	-	-	3,000
D'oyly Carte	-	-	-	3,500
Other income	-	-	-	1,093
A & H Pilkington	-	-	-	1,000
The Feeney Trust	-	-	-	4,400
	<u>474,163</u>	<u>75,000</u>	<u>549,163</u>	<u>474,366</u>