

www.spatheatre.com
Charity Number: 1092861

Spa Theatre Company

Annual Report 2024



Introduction

I am pleased to present this Annual Report for 2024; it describes what the charity has achieved over the last year, and how our income has been used to further our objectives.

We are a small voluntary team, and I pay tribute to everyone who has played a part in it.

I thank the Trustees for their tireless commitment to ensuring that Spa Theatre Company is well governed.

I also thank the volunteers who form the artistic production team; without their skills we would not achieve the artistic successes we have had.

I also thank a whole range of other volunteers, and the parents of the children, who all give their time and efforts into making the charity a success.



Phil Hall
Chair of Trustees

Please visit our website for more information: www.spatheatre.com

This Annual Report - General

This Annual Report has followed the guidance of the Charity Commission for England and Wales who are our regulatory authority. The Charity Commission’s Statement of Recommended Practice SORP (FRS 102) Accounting and Reporting by Charities provided the guidance for this report, and our accounts.

This report is intended to help people, including funders and beneficiaries, to understand why Spa Theatre Company does what it does. It explains the charity’s structure, aims, objectives, activities and performance. Importantly, it describes our primary sources of funding, and describes how the money was spent.

The Report is therefore laid out as follows:

Section 3:	About Spa Theatre Company
Section 4:	Charity’s Name, Registration Number, Address and Trustee Names
Section 5:	Structure and Details of how Spa Theatre Company is managed, including how it recruits trustees
Section 6:	Activities and Objectives in the Year
Section 7:	Achievements and Performance, including Reporting on the Public Benefit
Section 8:	Financial Review and Reserves Policy
Section 9:	Serious Incidents
Section 10:	Signed Statement

Section 3: Spa Theatre Company

The roots of the company go back to Christmas 1980, when the Leamington Spa Opera Group performed “The King and I” at the Royal Spa Centre in Leamington Spa. The show was produced by Phyl Harris. A number of young people were recruited to fill the roles of the Siamese children. Following the show, the youngsters wrote to Phyl asking her to keep them together as a young persons’ theatre group. The group had begun.

Spa Theatre Company performed its first show in 1982.

In 2000, the management committee (who supported Phyl) decided to apply for charitable status, in view of the emphasis on training and tuition. Charitable status was gained on 2nd February 2001.

The children who benefit from our activities are aged between 8 and 17 years 364 days. The Constitution allows the admission of people aged 18 or over into a Senior Section, but this section does not currently operate due to financial pressures.

This charitable status brought about a focus on governance, because of the need to prepare an Annual Report to the Charity Commission, and because the accounts had to be independently audited. The organisation became more professional in business terms, albeit still run by volunteers.

Apart from the adverse effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Company has been in continuous existence, continuing the training and performing role as it has since 1982.



Section 4: Name, Registration Number, Address and Trustees

4.1. The Charity's Name

The Charity's name is Spa Theatre Company.

4.2. The Charity's Registration Number

Spa Theatre Company is registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales, with the Registration Number: 1092861.

4.3. The Address of the Principal Office

The Charity does not own its own premises, but undertakes rehearsals and tuition at a local school, and performs annually at a local theatre. The management committee is a network of people operating from their own homes.

The Charity's formal legal contact is through the Chair of Trustees, whose name and address are as follows:

Mr Philip Edwin Hall, 11, Fernhill Drive, Leamington Spa, CV32 4JX.

4.4. Names of Charity's Trustees

- Chair of Trustees: Mr Philip Edwin Hall
- Treasurer: Mr Philip Edwin Hall
- Secretary: Mrs Vicky Burford
- Membership Manager: Mrs Anoushka Sheehan
- Fundraising Manager: Matt Lipson (until October 2024)
- Marketing Manager: Mrs Sara Jayne Melville
- Safeguarding Manager: Mrs Emma Graves

No other people served as a charity trustee or custodian trustee in the last financial year.

All the trustee posts are voluntary. No payments are given for acting as a trustee, although legitimate expenses are reimbursed.

Section 5: Structure, Governance and Management

The Charity has a formal Constitution, which is approved by the Charity Commission. The latest version of the Constitution is dated 23rd February, 2023.

The Charity is run by the Trustees, as a management committee. The Trustees are subject to nomination and appointment at an Annual General Meeting of the members of the charity, who are defined as the parents of the children under training.

The Charity operates by means of committee meetings, either by video-conference basis, or physically. The minutes of the meeting are formally recorded by the Company Secretary.

The Charity's accounts are subject to independent examination. The company has a number of policy documents, covering the following topics:

- Child Protection Policy;
- Inclusivity and Diversity;
- Financial Reserves;
- Data Protection / GDPR;
- Complaints Procedure;
- Lockdown Procedure;
- Code of Conduct;
- Internal Communications Policy.



Section 6: Objectives and Activities

6.1: The Purposes of the Charity

The Charity's objects, as defined in the Constitution, are: to promote, maintain, improve, and advance education by the encouragement of the arts, including the arts of drama, mime, dance, singing, music, stagecraft and other associated activities, all generally in the Warwick District area of Warwickshire.

6.2: The Main Activities Undertaken

The main activity of the Charity is as a teaching organisation. Children are taught the skills of the performing arts throughout the three school terms in an academic year.

The year begins with the recruitment of new members by means of audition. Typically, for two terms, the children learn these skills. Then, in the April or May of each year, the children put on public performances of a show at a local theatre.

After the show, the children return to a "back to basics" series of lessons, honing their skills. These skills are then showcased in an end-of-term concert, with parents, family and friends attending.

The children are taught all these skills by a Production Team, consisting of an Artistic Director, a Musical Director and a Choreographer. These people are volunteers, who are paid a modest honorarium for their services: they are not employees of the Company. All these people, having a teaching and Position of Trust role, are subject to an enhanced DBS check.

The annual show requires input from a whole range of volunteers, covering issues such as licensing the show, procuring the set, procuring the costumes, undertaking make-up duties, and chaperoning the children backstage at the theatre. All these people are volunteers too.

Section 7: Achievements and Performance

We report on our performance and achievements on several measures.

7.1: Our Main Mission - Teaching

Our main mission is teaching children in the performing arts. Typically, we have 35-45 members, all aged between 8 and 17. They learn the skills required to put on public performances of shows but they achieve so much more as well. The theatrical environment has a huge emphasis on teamwork and support.

The children learn highly transferable skills. They learn the importance of self-discipline, as they have to implicitly obey the instructions of the artistic team, in order to provide a performance of the highest possible standard.

Although we are an amateur organisation, we replicate the professional theatre as far as we are able. The reason for this is not only because we want to put on a high-quality performance, but because many of our pupils will go on to theatre studies courses at college or university, and later into a professional career. We aim to give them the sound basis for their futures.

Spa Theatre Company benefits from the support of various groups of volunteers to deliver its activities. These include:

- 5 Trustees;
- 15 Chaperones;
- 8 Front of House volunteers;
- 6 Backstage/lighting/stage make up volunteers;
- 1 Production manager;
- 3 Production team members;
- 3 Production assistants.



7.2: Production Assistants

One of the achievements of which we are proud is the opportunity we give to the older children, particularly as they approach the end of their time with us. As noted above, many go on to performing arts courses colleges and university.

In preparation, we offer three positions as Production Assistants to the main production team. These three shadow their mentors, and are often given specific responsibility for smaller groups of children undertaking delegated activities.

Typically, we appoint a shadow Director, a shadow Musical Director and a shadow Choreographer. We offer a very modest honorarium to the three Assistant roles, and this is always subject to the availability of external funding. In some years, we are able to support them from our internally-generated resources, but this support more usually requires external support. In 2024, specific support for this training was generously provided by Evenlode Investments.

7.3 Weekly Tuition

Our “week-in, week-out” training takes place in a local school, whose premises we hire; we do not own any property of our own.

During this training, the children learn the fundamentals of theatrical performance, as well as learning some of the technical aspects related to performing on stage at a local theatre. In a typical year, about 35-45 children will be under tuition.

In 2024, we held 39 rehearsal sessions, of 2 hours each, at Aylesford School in Warwick. The children therefore receive nearly 80 hours of formal training per year, supplemented by further hours in public performance.

7.4 Public Performances of a show - Les Miserables Junior Edition

Each year, we put on public performances of a show at a local theatre.

In 2024, we staged Les Miserables Junior Edition, at the Bridge House Theatre in Warwick. This show was seen by a record audience of about 1,200 people spread over 5 performances. The children benefitted from immersion into a theatrical environment, and learned so much about all of the things that have to be brought together to put on a visually-interesting and professional show.

The show itself, necessitated acting and singing skills of the highest order, and we received significant feedback from the audience about the professionalism of what they had just seen.

We thoroughly enjoyed the variety of ages. The musical talents of the performers, it was mesmerising, listening to them. It was like going to London to see a musical. Thank you to the wonderful musicians and backstage crew. It was so good we came twice.

One of the best shows I've ever seen. Could not believe the standard of the singing, the set, the production, the acting, the live music all absolutely sensational.

Amazing talent and a joy to have productions like this available to watch in Warwick!

Brilliant show - cast looked more engaged than when we'd seen a previous show, as though they really owned it. Quite mesmerising and remarkable.

We thank the production team for their inputs to this artistic spectacle, and we thank the staff of the Bridge House Theatre for accommodating us in a professional manner.

Section 8: Financial Review

8.1: The Reporting Period for this Report

The Charity's financial performance reported below is for our financial year which equates to the calendar year. This report is for 2024.

8.2: Our Accounts and Bankers

The Charity operates using one bank account, as follows:

- HSBC

8.3 Financial Results: Receipts and Payments, and Assets and Liabilities

Because our income lies between £25,000 and £250,000, we have prepared our accounts on a "Receipts and Payments" basis. This means that our accounts contain a statement summarising all money received and paid out in the financial year, and a statement of our assets and liabilities at the end of the year. Our accounts have been subject to independent examination.

All our income is in unrestricted funds.

The financial data is presented, in summary, on the Charity Commission Form CC16, but the following text goes into further detail about our financial performance.

8.3.1: Income Sources

Essentially, we have three significant sources of income:

- Membership Fees (and the Gift Aid accompanying them);
- Ticket Sales Income from the Annual Show;
- External Grants and Funding.

Membership Fees (and Gift Aid)

We aim to keep our membership fees at a level competitive with other organisations providing similar training. But we, unlike them, are not a professional business with large staffs and large overheads. Our fees are therefore somewhat lower, at £360 per academic year (for 80 hours tuition), but our standard is as high. Many of our children present themselves for audition after experience with others, and they comment very positively on the welcoming, friendly and family manner in which we treat them.

We also try to maintain fees at a slightly lower level to be as inclusive as possible. We do not want children to be priced out. To further support this aim, we offer a bursary funding for those families who are struggling with the cost of living. We can sometimes offer a reduced fee level from our own resources, but donors often find this aspect to be an attractive proposition for financial support. In 2024, two children benefitted from these bursary arrangements.

Ticket Sales Income from the Annual Show

We aim to set our ticket prices at a competitive level, compared to those charged by other performing organisations within a 10-20 mile radius. We continually benchmark ourselves against these other companies.

Again, like for membership fees, we aim towards the lower end of the pricing spectrum, so as to allow the widest possible participation by family, friends, relatives, supporters and former members who usually make up the bulk of our audience. The year 2024 was notably different in this regard. *Les Misérables* is such a well-loved show, it attracted significant number of the public. This resulted in our highest-ever box office income.

External Grants and Funding

We try to be self-sufficient in terms of balancing our income and expenditure, and do not want to be dependent on grant funding for our existence. But the rising cost of theatre hire, the royalties paid to the performing rights holders, as well as payments for the set and costumes all continue to put pressure on our finances.

Because we decided to stage *Les Misérables* in 2024, we knew we would have to put on a show as close to professional standards as possible. We therefore decided that we needed a live orchestra, and a professional set. These were expensive, and so our expenditure level in 2024 was also our highest ever. The success of this decision was borne out by the complimentary feedback we received, comparing us very favourably to a professional production.

We were therefore extremely pleased to receive grant-funding support from 5 sources;

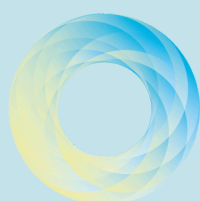


The Round Table



Royal Leamington Spa
Town Council

Royal Leamington
Spa Town Council



IMAGINGMATTERS

Imaging Matters
Limited



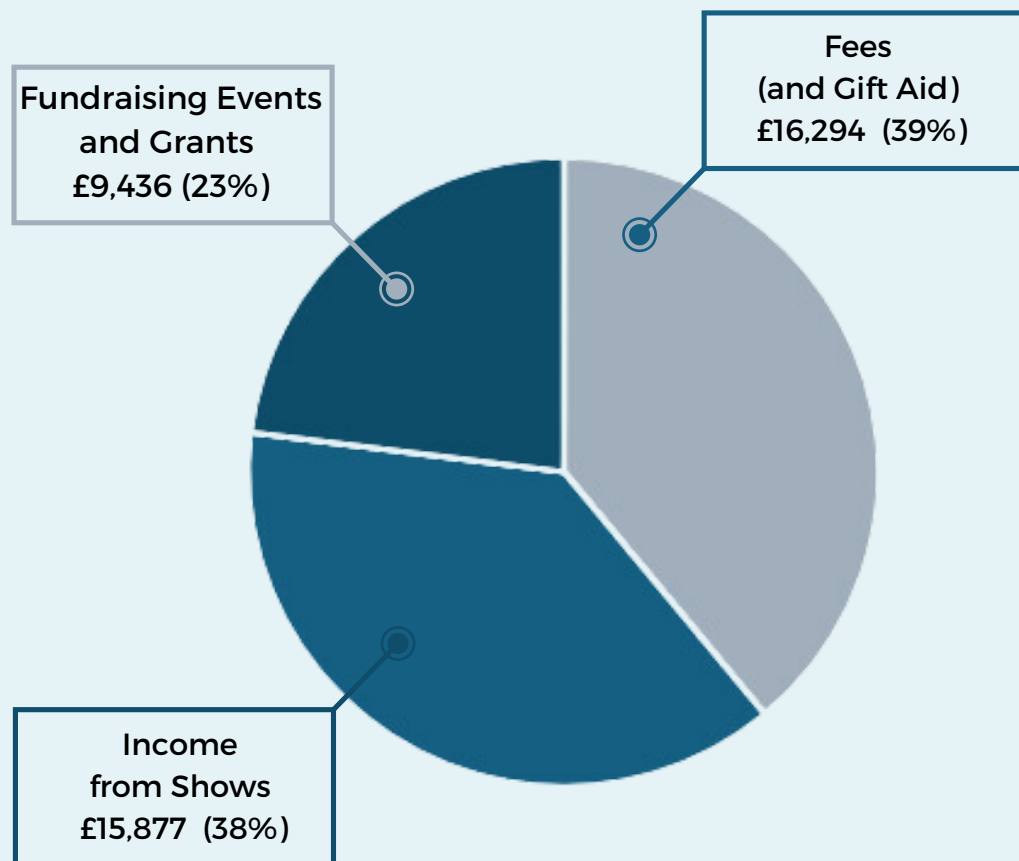
Warwick Castle
Lights Trail

Together, the income received totalled £5,670, which was hugely appreciated. We thank all those organisations.

8.3.2 Income - 2024 Breakdown

The pie chart below shows the breakdown of our 2024 income.

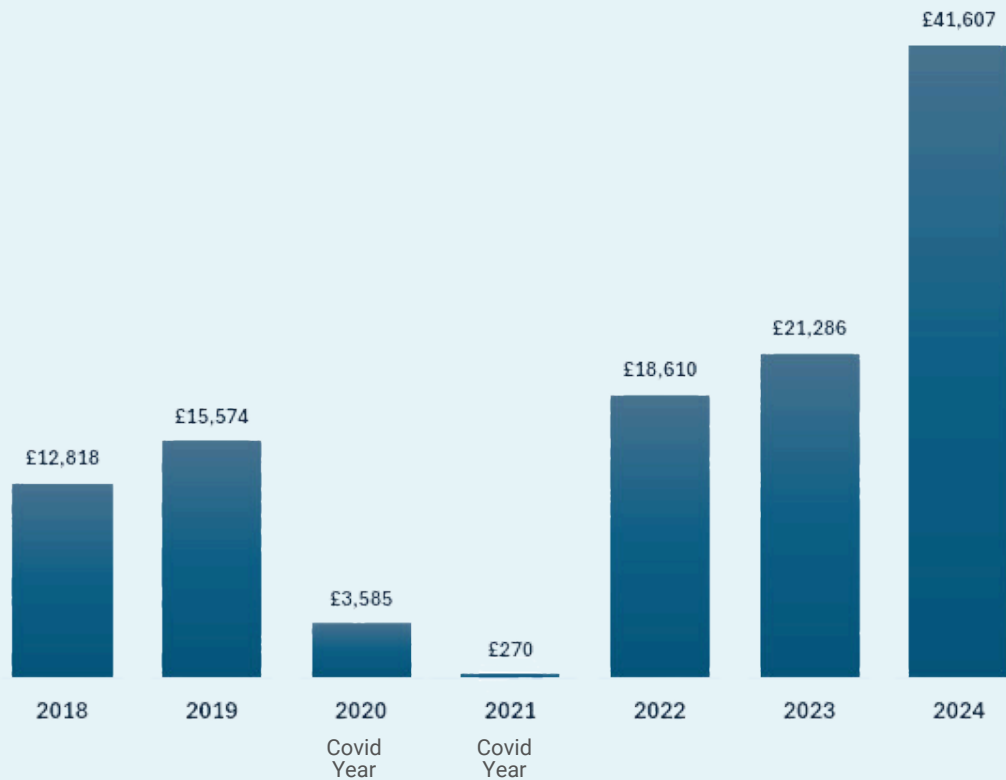
Total Income **£41,607**



As can be seen, our income is spread, without undue emphasis on any particular source. The total income and the proportions will fluctuate year-on-year, depending particularly on the financial success of the chosen show; some shows have more obvious box-office appeal, while others are more artistically challenging. We aim for a mixture, to sustain our income over a number of years.

8.3.3 Income - Historic Trends

The bar chart below shows the fluctuation of our income over the years 2018 to 2024 (noting that the years of 2020 and 2021 were affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, during which we had to suspend our operations).

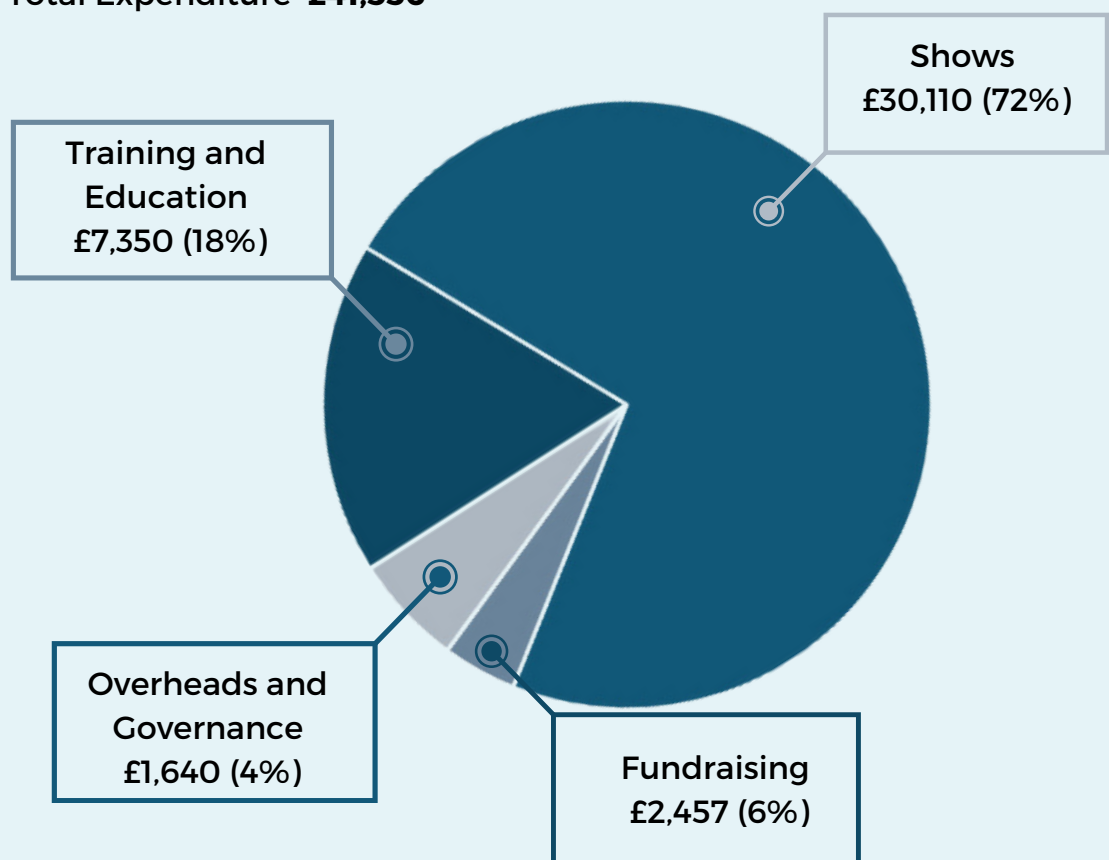


8.3.4. Expenditure - 2024 Breakdown

Our expenditure fluctuates, largely dependent on the technical complexities of the show we choose to perform. Many costs though recur on a year-by year basis; such as hire of premises, honoraria to the artistic team, insurances, membership of NODA etc.

The pie chart below shows the breakdown of our 2024 expenditure.

Total Expenditure **£41,556**



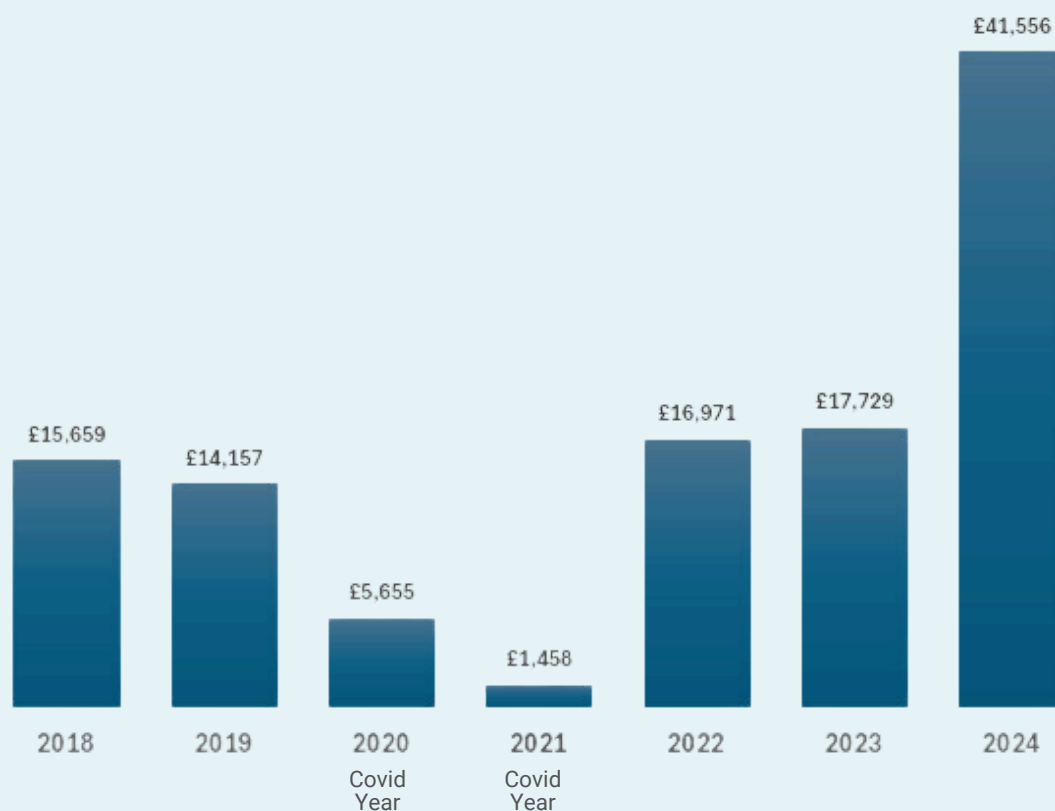
As can be seen, our mainstream activities of educating our children, and putting on our annual show account for 90% of our total expenditure.

Only 4% is spent on governance, mainly on the unavoidable costs of insurance and website management. Only 6% is spent on raising funds, another small proportion.

Our expenditure is therefore dominated, as it should be, by our charitable activities.

8.3.5. Expenditure - Historic Trends

The bar chart below shows the fluctuation of our expenditure over the years 2018 to 2024.



The years of 2020 and 2021 were affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, during which we had to suspend our operation, but nevertheless faced unavoidable costs (like bank charges) to maintain our existence.

8.3.6. Assets and Reserves – Policy and Results

The Charity has a risk-based approach to the level of reserves we hold. The primary sources of risk are:

- a collapse in the numbers of members (and hence membership fees);
- the unexpected cancellation of the annual show, when there could be a substantial expenditure already incurred with no mechanism to recover the losses.

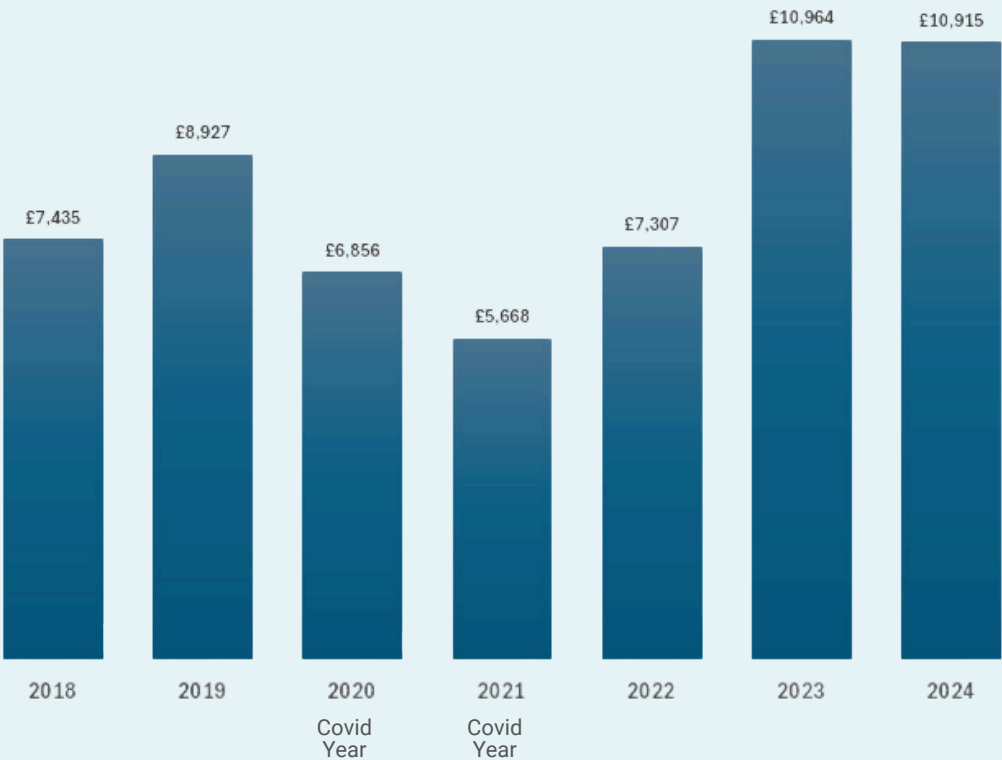
We seek to hold sufficient reserves to negate these adverse effects, and we calculated that we needed reserves of about 50% of our annual turnover. This is in line with recommendations from the Charity Commission for a charity of our size. The policy was vindicated during the Covid-19 outbreak, when our membership income collapsed, and we had no ticket income from our shows.

We had sufficient reserves to sustain our existence, but they fell to 34% of our turnover. We have since rebuilt reserves to a satisfactory level.

Our policy also reflects the cash flow position of the charity, whose reserves fall to their lowest level in the summer of each year, after we settle the expenditure associated with our annual show. We have to maintain an absolute minimum reserve of about £6,000 at December 31st of each year to avoid a negative cash-flow position in the summer, and the inability to settle our invoices.



The table below shows the reserves on December 31st of each year over the 2018 to 2024 period, and these reserves are relative to an average annual turnover of £16,170.



The average level of reserves was £8,281 over this period, relative to an average turnover of £16,170. This represents an average level of reserves of 51%, which is exactly in line with Charity Commission guidance.



Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from

1/1/2024

To

31/12/2024

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
FEES & GIFT AID	16294 0	0	0	16294 0	0
INCOME FROM SHOWS	15877 0	0	0	15877 0	0
FUND RAISING GRANTS	9436 0	0	0	9436 0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	41607 0	0	0	41607 0	21286 0
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
Sub total	0	0	0	0	0
Total receipts	0	0	0	0	0
A3 Payments					
OVERHEADS	1645 0	0	0	1645 0	0
TRAINING & EDUCATION	755 0	0	0	755 0	0
SHOWS	3010 0	0	0	3010 0	0
FUND RAISING	2456 0	0	0	2456 0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
Sub total	41556 0	0	0	41556 0	17729 0
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
Sub total	0	0	0	0	0
Total payments	0	0	0	0	0
Net of receipts/(payments)	0	0	0	51 0	0
A5 Transfers between funds	0	0	0	0	0
A6 Cash funds last year end	0	0	0	0	0
Cash funds this year end	0	0	0	10915 0	10864 0

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds				
	ASBC ACCOUNT	10915 0	0	0
		0	0	0
		0	0	0
	Total cash funds	10915 0	0	0
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))			
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds

B2 Other monetary assets

Details	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
	0	0	0
	0	0	0
	0	0	0
	0	0	0
	0	0	0
	0	0	0

B3 Investment assets

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		0	0
		0	0
		0	0
		0	0
		0	0

B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use

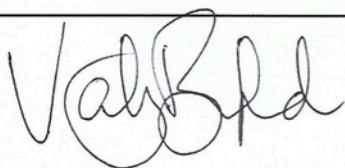
Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		0	0
		0	0
		0	0
		0	0
		0	0
		0	0
		0	0
		0	0

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		0	
		0	
		0	
		0	
		0	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature



Print Name

VICKY BURFORD

Date of approval

16.02.25

Independent Examiners Report

Accounts for the year end: 31 December 2024

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

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Charities Act 2011: or
2. The accounts do not accord with those records.

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

Pam East-Jones

25 Eliot Close

Warwick

CV34 5RE

Dated: 27 January 2025

8.4 Funds in Deficit

We have no funds in deficit.

“One of the best shows I’ve ever seen. Could not believe the standard of the singing, the set, the production, the acting, the live music all absolutely sensational.”



Section 9: Serious Incidents

We have a Child Protection Policy which is approved by our Safeguarding Authority, Warwickshire County Council (WCC).

All safeguarding serious incidents have been reported to the Charities Commission.



Section 10: Signed Statement

I, Vicky Burford, hereby sign this Annual Report as a true record of the activities of the Charity for the year from 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024, having been duly authorised to do so by the Trustees of the Charity.

Signed:



Name: Vicky Burford

Position: Company Secretary, Spa Theatre Company

Date: 21 May 2025

