

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

England & Wales · Charity number 1103877

Details

Other names	THE ASHTON GROUP, Theatre Factory
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	04941112
Registered	2004-05-21
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address The Ashton Group Theatre
1st Floor
The Cooke's Studios
104 Abbey Road
Barrow-In-Furness
CUMBRIA

Phone 01229430636

Email info@theatrefactory.org

Website www.theatrefactory.org

Activities

Objects: TO PROMOTE, MAINTAIN, IMPROVE AND ADVANCE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC IN THE ART OF DRAMA AND THE OTHER ARTS AND IN PARTICULAR TO ENCOURAGE AND FOSTER THE STUDY, PERFORMANCE, KNOWLEDGE UNDERSTANDING, APPRECIATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF DRAMA THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF DRAM PRODUCTIONS AND EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP PROGRAMMES. ALSO TO ENCOURAGE THE ARTS OF DRAMA, MIME, DANCE, SONG, AND MUSIC, AND TO FORMULATE, PREPARE AND ESTABLISH SCHEMES THEREFOR, PROVIDED THAT ALL OBJECTS OF THE COMPANY SHALL BE EXCLUSIVELY CHARITABLE.

Activities: The organisations objects and principal activities are to promote, maintain, improve and advance education of the public in the art of drama and the other arts and to encourage the development of drama though drama productions and educational workshop programmes.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training, Disability, Arts/culture/heritage/science
- **Who:** Children/young People, People With Disabilities, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Cumbria
- Lancashire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£335,771	£261,768	-	-
2024-03-31	£266,079	£270,674	-	-
2023-03-31	£195,383	£197,121	-	-
2022-03-31	£178,720	£193,409	-	-
2021-03-31	£186,094	£159,251	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Colin Vaughan Aldred	Chair	2023-06-21
Doreen Floyd		2023-06-21
Hayley Louise Preston		2021-08-25
Jacqueline Ann Drake		2023-06-21
Laura Crellin		2026-05-27
Macy Richards		2026-05-27

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

England & Wales - Charity number 1103877

Accounts

Company Number 04941112

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

(A company limited by guarantee)

**ANNUAL REPORT
and
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2025

Charity Number: 1103877

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE
(A company limited by guarantee)

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2025

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THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

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Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: The Ashton Group Theatre
Charity Number: 1103877
Company Number: 04941112
Registered Office and operational address: 1st Floor, The Cooke's Studios, 104 Abbey Road
Barrow in Furness, Cumbria, LA14 5QR

Board Members at date of approval of this report:

Colin Vaughan Aldred	Hayley Louise Preston
Doreen Floyd	Jacqueline Ann Drake
Janice Benson	Michael Hudson

Company Secretary: Rachel Ashton

Charity Correspondence: Rachel Ashton

Artistic Director: Rachel Ashton

Reporting Accountants: Ad Valorem North Limited
Second Floor, Ramsden House
121 – 123 Duke Street
Barrow-in-Furness
Cumbria
LA14 1XA

Bankers: Co-Operative Bank
PO Box 250
Delf House
Southway
Skelmersdale
WN8 6WT

www.theatrefactory.org

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2025

The Board of Directors is pleased to present its Annual Report and unaudited financial statements for the year ended March 31 2025.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

The Ashton Group Theatre is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on October 22 2003 and registered as a charity on May 21 2004. The Charitable Company lay dormant until April 1 2005. It was incorporated with reference to a Memorandum of Association, which established the objects and powers of the Charitable Company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the Charitable Company being wound up the members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

Recruitment and Appointment of Board Members

The Directors of the Company are also the Charity Trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the Company's articles are known as Members of the Board (or Board of Management). Under section 34 of the Articles the Board are deemed to have been appointed for a term of three years. This period may be extended by a further appointment to a second term of again three years. However, following six years of service Board Members must stand down for a period of at least one year. Upon the expiry of this one-year the six-year cycle may begin once more.

The Board seeks to ensure that the needs of the Charitable Company's users and beneficiaries are appropriately reflected through the diversity of people elected as Board Members. The Board tries to provide a broad mix of skills amongst the Board Members as a group. Prospective Board Members are encouraged to attend events and familiarise themselves with the Charitable Company's activities and the context within which it operates.

Objectives and Activities

The Charitable Company's objects and principal activities are to promote, maintain, improve and advance education of the public in the art of drama and the other arts to encourage the development of drama through drama productions and educational workshop programmes.

The main activities in the period under review focused on a mixed programme of performance and participatory projects in drama and theatre writing with regeneration objectives.

The strategies employed to assist the Charitable Company to meet these objectives included the following:

- Providing a range of services which reflect relevant quality standards and address the artistic policy of creating work which entertains its audiences and participants by giving voice to a range of contemporary experiences
- Focusing on the introduction of new ideas and ways of working
- Working towards raising and maintaining audience and participation levels by respecting the needs of these groups
- Working in partnership with Arts Council England North West

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2025 (continued)

The Ashton Group is a production led organisation. We operate a year round programme of weekly projects which are designed to mirror contemporary theatre industry practices. Our weekly sessions develop skills whilst being essentially about creating and producing new work. We work with professional artists to achieve this.

Our programme and our base are both called Theatre Factory.

Our core values are:

We put the young people who are our participants at the heart of the creative process.
We produce contemporary theatre that engages with its audience by giving a platform to new and interesting voices from sectors of the community which are often overlooked.
Our work is focussed around a core of projects including 2 age graded Youth Theatres and The Apprenticed Actors Touring Company which gives young people work experience.

MAKING STORIES, DEVELOPING TALENT, BUILDING CHANGE

All our projects are free to participants and audience, although we often receive small audience donations.

We are based in the Cooke's Arts and Media Centre where we have a fully equipped theatre studio and room to act, improvise, make things, move around, puppet, bang drums, animate, perform and film.

We run all kinds of projects: theatre (indoors, outdoors and online), animation, writing, digital and sound. We make stories in collaboration with children, young people and the occasional adult. Their ideas are at the heart of everything we do.

Our work starts in the Community, moves up through Youth Theatre and on into professional practice. A big part of our role is to nurture emerging local Artists. The Company has assisted a growing number of young people to enter the Creative Industries.

We are interested in how the Performing and Associated Arts can help people and communities grow stronger, so we work closely with other organisations in Barrow whose work shares similar aims to ours. We add our skills to theirs to help our community to thrive. In short, we work with people to build resilience and happiness for all.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2025 (continued)

Our Projects in 2024-25

Youth Theatre

Youth Theatre is still at the heart of what we do and is currently 50% Neuro Diverse. Two groups run on Tuesdays and Thursdays and this year they performed their show *Patchwork* at Theatre Factory for 2 nights in February.

Enviro Making

Karen Evans worked with Barrowfull's artist Danielle Aspinall to deliver a 'make do and mend' project on Barrow Island.

Karen also worked with Maddie Humberstone to create a 'Toile de Jouy' featuring cultural and historical scenes of Barrow. The design has been digitised in Bristol and will be printed onto organic cotton to form a series of banners for the IF! Festival and gift pieces for our partners in the community.

Karen also led our Blue Plaques project, working in the community and education sectors, facilitating people to create over 300 'alternative blue plaques for Barrow' out of scrap cardboard.

Apprentices

The Apprentices programme takes a group of young trainee actors each year and gives them industry experience performing a new piece of work and then touring throughout the Northwest.

This year's project, *Voices of Generation Zed 3*, comprised nine short plays by three writers, Phill Gregg, Tabby Lamb and Kevin Dyer, and toured to eight venues.

Influencers

Influencers are young people going out into the wider community to assist on our projects in partnership with other organisations. This project is all about getting out into the community and learning production skills.

This year the Influencers participated in Pride, International Women's Day and Q5.

Gen Zed Artists

Gen Zed Artists is a scheme which takes young Artists and gives them:

- mentoring, including advice on business planning and making applications for funding
- space and finance to create their own piece of work

This year we commissioned Matt King (Writer) and Kyra Scott (Theatre Maker/Performer) to produce new pieces of work.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2025 (continued)

LGBTQ+

Q5 was the fifth of our Queer Cabaret Evenings, open to all. Performed at Barrow Central Library, it was an evening of music and comedy from local and national performers and included free food and a pay-what-you-like bar.

Girls Night Out

We produced a cabaret evening of music, drama and food for women of all ages in the town, with all performers and audience being women. The night included Kyra Scott's performance of her one woman show *It is what It is*. To the best of our knowledge, it was the first ever women only event of its kind to be held in the town. This was an opportunity for women to talk openly about their experiences and what they would like to see changed. The sixty women present talked about abuse, fat shaming, body image and controlling relationships. The feedback from the evening is forming the basis of Kyra Scott's commissioned play on women and mental health, *Unboxing*, which will be part of the IF! Festival in March 2026.

Terrific Tales

Terrific Tales is an ongoing development project for the IF! Festival performance of *67,000 Barrovians Can't be Wrong*, encouraging local people to tell their stories – true and mythic – about Barrow. We performed script-in-hand excerpts using professional and local actors at Theatre Factory in April 2024 and March 2025.

IF! Festival

Development for the IF! Festival has been a big part of this year, with the timeline and venues in place. Scripts have been commissioned and technicians contracted and the collecting of local stories for *67,000 Barrovians Can't be Wrong* is ongoing.

Facts and Figures

During the year we worked with:

Children and young people between the ages of 7-30 living in Barrow-in-Furness, from the priority wards – **1,575**

LGBTQ+ young people and vulnerable adults in the Borough – **19** participants and **60** audience

Young people and vulnerable adults struggling with their mental health and well-being – **33**.

Young people with additional needs (Autistic Spectrum conditions) – **58**

Young emerging artists from Barrow – **9**

People of diverse heritage and culture including asylum seekers – **284**

Impact and Beneficiaries

We aimed:

- to boost confidence
- to create a safe nurturing space where people can be happy and have fun and find respite from the strains of life.
- to help people to find companionship and to be less lonely

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2025 (continued)

This is what people have said:

"I feel it is a safe space to think creatively, to have a laugh, to express myself."

"It is a safe space where you can express yourself and feel safe to share your ideas."

"It has helped me a lot with my confidence and communication skills."

A teacher from Senior Leadership at St George's School reports that:

'The children cannot stop talking about the drama workshops. They re-enact them in the playground every day'. We know from this that the children are benefitting from the workshops. We also know because the attendance is consistent.

Supporting People's Mental Health

We worked with Children and Young People from Barrow, through our Youth Theatres held on Tuesdays and Thursdays for 7–25-year-olds, and an after-school 'satellite' Youth Theatre, *Drama on Your Doorstep*, on Wednesday afternoons. *Drama on Your Doorstep* is run from St George's C of E Primary School for pupils of St George's and Sacred Heart RC Primary. The needs are as follows:

- Our Youth Theatre is 50% neuro diverse. We are specialists in working with neuro diversity and drama. Our young people need low stress approaches in small groups where there is less pressure. We have developed ways of producing performance that reduces learning pressure and maximises fun and creativity through improvisational methods.
- Children at St George's and Sacred Heart, primaries in the areas of highest need, do not engage with arts provision unless it is brought to them. In the words of one of the teachers we talked to, 'They are not often taken off their own street.' Our *Drama on Your Doorstep* addresses this.

We have also established a drama group for adults at risk of social isolation. The group ranges in age from 26 to 82 and provides creative fun and social interaction. In the group there are individuals with mobility issues, MS, brain injury and autistic spectrum conditions.

Supporting Young Artists

- We commissioned two young writers under our Gen Zed Artists scheme. The most important thing for young artists at the start of their career is work. Kyra Scott and Matt King are local, and they are both writing for the company which gives them an invaluable first item on their C.V.
- We mentored three other young artists, supporting the development of their work and business planning.
- We gave contractual performance work to four young female artists as part of *Girls Night Out*. Again, their needs are to be employed and to develop their portfolios.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2025 (continued)

Case Study

Joe is 31 and a professional musician. He attended our Youth Theatre from the age of 10. Joe has had significant mental health problems since the death of his best friend 5 years ago. He has been unable to sustain employment or to engage with his practice as a professional musician. Encouraged by his dad, Joe took up cycling and found the beginnings of a way back, but his recovery was very up and down. Eventually he contacted Theatre Factory and came to talk about an idea he had had for a project based on his mental health journey. Rachel mentored Joe over a period of months to write the idea into a concrete form and to approach Arts Council England for funding to help produce the piece. Theatre Factory put Joe in touch with Comic Arts Festival, Kendal and slowly his confidence returned. Then Joe got an outdoor job in Scotland. He was able to take the job and to thrive again. In September of 2024, Theatre Factory commissioned Joe to perform with his band Hobby Club at our Queer Cabaret. It was the first time that Joe has been able to perform to a live audience since the death of his friend in 2019. Joe's story is an example of how our work functions over a span of time, from laying foundations at Youth Theatre to supporting mental health and functionality in adulthood.

Here is what Joe says:

"Youth Theatre was great at giving me the self-confidence to be creative in a non-judgmental environment. I had found in traditional education settings my imagination and high energy levels were not appreciated, whereas I found likeminded people who didn't necessarily fit within conventional moulds of society, were allowed to flourish and express themselves in more natural ways. I also enjoyed being treated more like an adult when it came to rehearsals and treating the work with seriousness and showing levels of professionalism and discipline needed in the creative industry. It helped me understand what level of engagement I needed to succeed in my own creative work. Despite not pursuing acting further I became a musician, and I found I learnt a lot of transferable skills that helped me develop my craft and skills which the seedlings of all those ideas and disciplines took root while young. I also appreciated all the different aspects of creative professionals I've encountered and wanted to do that myself. As previously stated, it was an important place for me to learn how to create and be allowed space to be creative despite being hyperactive and probably quite annoying. I was still allowed and encouraged to engage with the group, I made friends and loved my time there. I was diagnosed with dyslexia much later while at college and so really struggled at school, but Theatre Factory was a place where I felt I could thrive and not just be seen as a lazy nuisance because of my undiagnosed learning difficulty. So, thank you Rachel and Phill for letting me learn and enjoy being myself."

Finance

Our fundraising strategy continues to be underpinned by applying for multi-year grants wherever possible. This gives us certainty about the sustainability of our projects going forward and allows breathing space between applications so that we can consider which funders are most likely to be a good match for our work.

Our financial strategy is currently focused on the IF! Festival, which comprises ten pieces of work produced over 12 months spanning 2025-26 and 2026-27. Concern about fundraising in the time scale led us to delay the IF! Festival by 6 months, which allowed us to build reserves. This is the reason there is such a large amount carried forward from this year into 2025-26. The first year of the festival is now fully funded and we are working to ensure that funding is place for year 2.

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

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REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2025 (continued)

How do we view the artistic quality of the work produced and how was this assessed?

Innovation

We recognise the need to continually bring new ideas and influences to our work. This year we have brought in a number of new artists to work with both participants and creative team and we continue to value the work of artists who have worked with the company for a number of years.

Audience Audit

Throughout the year we have performed a Quality Audit with our public audiences.

Management ability

Our board continue to give the company good positive support.

What was the public benefit?

Our audiences and participation figures have held steady for the last 5 years.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2025 (continued)

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

The future strategy is to continue to build up free reserves through planned operating surpluses. However the Board is aware that it is unlikely that the target range can be reached for at least two or three years. For the short term the Board has also had to consider the extent to which existing activities and expenditure might have to cut back in order to operate within a smaller amount of available funds.

RISK REVIEW

The Board has in place a risk management strategy, which comprises:

- A quarterly review at board meetings of the risks the Charity may face;
- the establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate the risks identified in the plan; and
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the Charity should any of those risks materialise

The Board Members are particularly aware of the need to broaden the Charity's funding base, and to this end have commissioned Good Fundraising to review the fundraising operation.

This strategy is informed by the need for the Charity to fulfil its financial obligations to staff and contractors. The reserves policy applies and will be followed as necessary. (see previous page).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Company law requires the Board Members to prepare financial statements that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity at the end of the financial year and of the surplus or deficit for the financial year.

In doing so the Board Members are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable 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 appropriate to presume that the Company is unable to continue its activities

The Board Members are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2025 (continued)

Acknowledgements

The Charity is grateful for the continued support of its funders in the period under review:

- Arts Council England (North West)
- National Lottery Know Your Neighbourhood Fund
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- Sir John Fisher Foundation
- BAE Systems
- Westmorland and Furness Council
- Francis C Scott Trust
- The Hadfield Trust
- The Garfield Weston Foundation
- The David Snowden Trust
- Cumbria Community Foundation

This report was approved by the Board on:

Date: -

20/11/25

and signed on its behalf by: -

COUIN VAUGHAN HUGHES

Chir Ahmed

Signature of the
Chair of the Board

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY (Including Income and Expenditure Account)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2025

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	Notes	Unrestricted Funds 2024-2025 £	Restricted Funds 2024-2025 £	Total Funds 2024-2025 £	Total Funds 2023-2024 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
<i>Incoming resources from charitable activities:</i>					
Grants towards arts projects	2	223173	110383	333556	264950
Contribution to equipment		-	-	-	-
Workshops and performances		-	-	-	-
Sundry Income				0	0
<i>Investment income and interest</i>		2215	-	2215	1129
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		<u>225388</u>	<u>110383</u>	<u>335771</u>	<u>266079</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
<i>Cost of generating funds</i>					
Applying for funding and compliance costs	3	<u>3568</u>	<u>5354</u>	<u>8922</u>	<u>8591</u>
<i>Charitable activities</i>					
Projects, training and advice	4	129481	105029	234510	234034
<i>Governance costs</i>	4	<u>18336</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>18336</u>	<u>28049</u>
<i>Total cost of activities</i>	4	<u>147817</u>	<u>105029</u>	<u>252846</u>	<u>262083</u>
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		<u>151385</u>	<u>110383</u>	<u>261768</u>	<u>270674</u>
Net incoming (outgoings) resources before transfers		74003	-	74003	-4595
Gross transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS (net income for the year)		<u>74003</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>74003</u>	<u>-4595</u>
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward at April 1 2024		59438	-	59438	64033
TOTAL FUNDS AT 31 MARCH 2025		<u>133441</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>133441</u>	<u>59438</u>

The statement of financial activities included all gains and losses in the year.

All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities

The note on pages 13 to 19 form part of these financial statements

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE
BALANCE SHEET AS AT MARCH 31 2025

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	Notes	£	2025 £	£	2024 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	7		10008		8403
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	9	4342		4342	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>122956</u>		<u>50306</u>	
		127298		54648	
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due in one year	10	<u>3865</u>		<u>3613</u>	
Net current assets			123433		51035
NET ASSETS			<u><u>133441</u></u>		<u><u>59438</u></u>
FUNDS					
Unrestricted funds	16		133441		59438
Restricted funds			-		-
TOTAL FUNDS			<u><u>133441</u></u>		<u><u>59438</u></u>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under section 476 (1) of the Companies Act 2006.

For the year ended March 31 2025 the Company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The members have not required the Company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

Approved by the Board of Directors on :-

And signed on their behalf by :-

DIRECTOR

The notes on pages 13 to 19 form part of these financial statements

20/11/25
COCIN VAUGHAN AUDITOR
C. L. Alshah

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1 Accounting policies

The principle accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the requirements of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (the SORP), applicable accounting standards, the FRSSE and the Companies Act 2006.

Income resources

Income resources include grants that represent unrestricted funds for general purposes but also project grants that are restricted in use (see note 2). Income resources are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amounts are quantifiable. Income resources are included gross, (that is, before any deduction of related costs).

Incoming resources are sometime deferred, for example if fees or project grants have been received in advance of future accounting periods or if the donors and grantors impose pre-conditions that have not yet been met.

Incoming resources from workshops and performances are recognised as having been earned in the same period as when the related activities are provided (i.e. on a receivable basis).

Investment income is recognised on a receivable basis.

Any intangible income (e.g. comprising donated services) is included in income at a valuation which is an estimate of the financial cost borne by the donor but only where such a cost is quantifiable and measurable. No income is recognised when there is no financial cost borne by the third party.

Resources expended

All resources expended are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on an accruals basis and are listed under headings that aggregate all the costs related to that activity. Where costs cannot be directly attributed they are allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

The costs of generating funds include those costs incurred in applying for funding and compliance costs.

The costs of charitable activities include resources expended on performances and projects, touring, education and outreach work.

Governance costs include those costs incurred in connection with the management of the Charity.

Rehearsal costs, preparatory costs and production costs are recognised in the year in which they arise. Costs relating to productions not opened yet are carried forward as current assets at the year-end date.

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1 **Accounting policies (continued)**

Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities as incurred over the term of the lease.

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset to a suitable residual value over its expected useful life, which in the case of an item of equipment is estimated at four years. Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £250 or where otherwise appropriate.

Fund accounting

Funds held by the Charitable company comprise either: -

~ **Unrestricted general funds** - these are funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the Trustees.

~ **Designated funds** - these are funds set aside from time to time by the Trustees out of unrestricted general funds for specific purposes or projects. (There are none currently designated).

~ **Restricted funds** - these are funds that can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular projects and restricted purposes.

Further explanations of the nature and purposes of each fund are included in the notes to the financial statements where necessary.

	Unrestricted Funds 2024-2025 £	Restricted Funds 2024-2025 £	Total Funds 2024-2025 £	Total Funds 2023-2024 £
2 INCOMING RESOURCES				
BAE Systems	-	9176	9176	-
ACE Regular funded organisation grant	148790	-	148790	149290
The National Lottery Community Fund	-	51862	51862	50351
Art Gene Ltd - Lost Shops Project	-	-	-	5000
Francis C Scott Trust	-	15000	15000	-
The Hadfield Trust	-	3000	3000	-
Sir John Fisher Foundation	15000	-	15000	15000
Donations	343	-	343	779
Women's Community Matters - Playcation	-	750	750	500
Cumbria Community Foundation	-	5000	5000	-
David Snowdon Trust	-	5000	5000	-
The Garfield Weston Foundation	25000	-	25000	-
Rosehill Theatre	-	-	-	200
Westmorland and Furness Council - Covid Recovery	22500	-	22500	-
National Lottery Know Your Neighbourhood Fund	-	19795	19795	17250
Baywind Energy Community Trust	-	-	-	5000
Westmorland and Furness Council - National Portfolio	10000	-	10000	10000
National Lottery Awards for All	-	-	-	10000
Barrow BID Grant	-	-	-	1000
The Old Electric	-	800	800	-
Space Rental	1540	-	1540	580
Total incoming resources	<u>223173</u>	<u>110383</u>	<u>333556</u>	<u>264950</u>

3 COST OF GENERATING FUNDS

Gross pay - salaries and wages	2719	4079	6798	6557
Social Security costs	188	282	470	390
Employees pension	100	151	251	134
Rent	334	501	835	738
Charity business rates and water rates	-18	-27	-45	30
Light and heat	69	104	173	120
Insurances	44	66	110	143
Repairs and maintenance	37	55	92	225
Telephone and communications	12	18	30	25
Printing, stationery and postage	11	17	28	29
Office expenses	5	8	13	60
Bank charges	0	0	0	0
Depreciation	67	100	167	140
Total Cost of Generating Funds	<u>3568</u>	<u>5354</u>	<u>8922</u>	<u>8591</u>

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2025

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4 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	DIRECT COSTS	SUPPORT COSTS	GOVERNANCE COSTS	Total	Total
	<i>ALLOCATED TO ACTIVITIES</i>	<i>ALLOCATED TO ACTIVITIES</i>		2024-2025	2023-2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Gross pay - salaries and wages	109789	12916	6458	129163	124587
Social Security costs	7591	893	447	8931	7425
Employees Pension	4056	477	239	4772	2547
Fees payable	53261	-	-	53261	60923
Production costs	4542	-	-	4542	4557
Accommodation on tour	5242	-	-	5242	6272
Travel and subsistence	8931	-	-	8931	6041
Publicity	1511	-	-	1511	1152
Rent	13490	1587	794	15871	14033
Charity business rates and water	-725	-85	-43	-853	566
Light and heat	2798	329	165	3292	2274
Insurances	1767	208	104	2079	2729
Repairs and maintenance	1489	175	88	1752	4269
Telephone and communications	474	56	28	558	475
Printing, stationery and postage	444	52	26	522	554
Office expenses	208	24	12	244	1133
Bank charges	-	-	-	0	0
Depreciation	2693	317	158	3168	2659
Annual Report	-	-	747	747	747
Filing fees	-	-	-	0	0
Legal fees	-	-	9113	9113	19140
Totals to Statement of Activities	<u>217561</u>	<u>16949</u>	<u>18336</u>	<u>252846</u>	<u>262083</u>

5 NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

Net movement in funds is stated after charging: -

	2024-2025	2023-2024
	£	£
Reporting accountants' remuneration: -		
Annual report and book-keeping fees	747	747
Incorporation and advice	-	-
Depreciation of fixed assets	3335	2799
Operating lease rentals	16705	14771
Number of Trustees reimbursed	-	-
Directors' remuneration and trustees' expenses	-	-

6 STAFF COSTS AND NUMBERS	2024-2025	2023-2024
	£	£
Gross salaries	135962	131145
Social security costs	9400	7816
	<u>145362</u>	<u>138961</u>

The average weekly number of staff including secondees during the period calculated on the basis of full-time equivalents was:-

	No.	No.
Direct charitable and support	3.8	1.8
Fundraising and publicity	0.35	0.1
Management and administration	0.35	0.1
	<u>4.5</u>	<u>2.0</u>

No employee or secondee received emoluments of more than £60000.

7 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS	Project and office equipment	March 2025 Total
Cost: -	£	£
As at April 1 2024	38391	38391
Additions	4940	4940
Disposals	-	-
As at March 31 2025	<u>43331</u>	<u>43331</u>
Depreciation: -	£	£
As at April 1 2024	29988	29988
Charge for the year	3335	3335
Disposals	-	-
As at March 31 2025	<u>33323</u>	<u>33323</u>
Net Book Value: -	£	£
As at March 31 2025	<u>10008</u>	<u>10008</u>
<i>Net Book Value: -</i>	£	£
<i>As at March 31 2024</i>	<u>8403</u>	<u>8403</u>
	Furniture and office equipment	Furniture and office equipment
The net book value at March 2025 represents assets for:	£	£
Shared activities	<u>10008</u>	<u>10008</u>

8 CAPITAL COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

There were no capital commitments at the balance sheet date nor any contingent liabilities

	March 2025 Total £	March 2024 Total £
9 DEBTORS		
Grants and fees receivable	4342	4342
Prepayments and accrued box office income	-	
Total Debtors	<u>4342</u>	<u>4342</u>

10 CREDITORS

Amounts falling due within one year: -

	£	£
Creditors	0	0
Social security and other taxes	2867	2615
Accruals	998	998
Deferred Income	0	0
Total Creditors	<u>3865</u>	<u>3613</u>

11 CONSTITUTION

The Company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. In the event of the Company being wound up the members are committed to contributing £1 each.

12 TRANSACTIONS WITH DIRECTORS

There are no transaction with Directors which require to be disclosed under the FRSSE.

13 TAXATION

The Company is a registered charity and is entitled to claim annual exemption from UK corporation tax.

14 OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

At the balance sheet date the Company had the following annual commitments on leases expiring: -

	2025 Land £	2025 Other £	2024 Land £	2024 Other £
Within two and five years	-	-	-	-
Beyond five years	<u>16705</u>	-	<u>14771</u>	-

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2025

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15 STATEMENT OF FUNDS	Balance Apr-24 £	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Transfers between Funds £	Balance Mar-25 £
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	59438	225388	(151385)	-	133441
	<u>59438</u>	<u>225388</u>	<u>(151385)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>133441</u>
Restricted funds					
Project grants and project costs	-	110383	(110383)	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>110383</u>	<u>(110383)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>59438</u>	<u>335771</u>	<u>(262218)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>133441</u>

16 Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at March 31 2025 are represented by	Restricted funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	10008	10008
Current assets	-	127298	127298
Current liabilities	-	(3865)	(3613)
	<u>-</u>	<u>133441</u>	<u>133441</u>

**ACCOUNTANT'S REPORTS TO THE MEMBERS ON THE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
OF THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2025**

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We report on the financial statements for the year ended March 31 2025 set out on pages 11 to 12.

Respective responsibilities of Directors and Reporting Accountants

The Company's Board is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and they consider that the company is exempt from an audit. It is our responsibility to carry out procedures designed to enable us to report our opinion.

Basis of opinion

Our work was conducted in accordance with the Statement of Standards for Reporting Accountants and so our procedures consisted of comparing the financial statements with the accounting records kept by the Committee and making such limited enquiries of the officers of the Association as we considered necessary for the purposes of this report. These procedures provide only the assurance expressed in our opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion :

- (a) the financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records kept by the Charity under Section 386 of the Companies Act 2006;
- (b) having regard only to, and on the basis of, the information contained in those accounting records :
 - (i) the financial statements have been drawn up in a manner consistent with the accounting requirements specified in Section 393 of the Act;
 - (ii) the Charity satisfied the conditions for exemption from an audit of the financial statements for the year specified in Section 477(2) of the Act and did not, at any time within that year, fall within any of the categories of companies not entitled to the exemption specified in Section 276(1).

Ad Valorem North
Second Floor, Ramsden House
121 - 123 Duke street
Barrow-in-Furness
Cumbria
LA14 1XA

Date:

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

England & Wales - Charity number 1103877

Accounts

Company Number 04941112

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

(A company limited by guarantee)

**ANNUAL REPORT
and
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2024

Charity Number: 1103877

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE
(A company limited by guarantee)

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2024

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THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

Page 1

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: The Ashton Group Theatre
Charity Number: 1103877
Company Number: 04941112
Registered Office and operational address: 1st Floor, The Cooke's Studios, 104 Abbey Road
Barrow in Furness, Cumbria, LA14 5QR

Board Members at date of approval of this report:

Colin Vaughan Aldred	Hayley Louise Preston
Doreen Floyd	Jackie Ann Drake
Janice Benson	Michael Hudson

Company Secretary: Rachel Ashton

Charity Correspondence: Rachel Ashton

Artistic Director: Rachel Ashton

Reporting Accountants: Ad Valorem North Limited
Second Floor, Ramsden House
121 – 123 Duke Street
Barrow-in-Furness
Cumbria
LA14 1XA

Bankers: Co-Operative Bank
PO Box 250
Delf House
Southway
Skelmersdale
WN8 6WT

www.theatrefactory.org

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2024

The Board of Directors is pleased to present its Annual Report and unaudited financial statements for the year ended March 31 2024.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

The Ashton Group Theatre is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on October 22 2003 and registered as a charity on May 21 2004. The Charitable Company lay dormant until April 1 2005. It was incorporated with reference to a Memorandum of Association, which established the objects and powers of the Charitable Company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the Charitable Company being wound up the members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

Recruitment and Appointment of Board Members

The Directors of the Company are also the Charity Trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the Company's articles are known as Members of the Board (or Board of Management). Under section 34 of the Articles the Board are deemed to have been appointed for a term of three years. This period may be extended by a further appointment to a second term of again three years. However, following six years of service Board Members must stand down for a period of at least one year. Upon the expiry of this one-year the six-year cycle may begin once more.

The Board seeks to ensure that the needs of the Charitable Company's users and beneficiaries are appropriately reflected through the diversity of people elected as Board Members. The Board tries to provide a broad mix of skills amongst the Board Members as a group. Prospective Board Members are encouraged to attend events and familiarise themselves with the Charitable Company's activities and the context within which it operates.

Objectives and Activities

The Charitable Company's objects and principal activities are to promote, maintain, improve and advance education of the public in the art of drama and the other arts to encourage the development of drama through drama productions and educational workshop programmes.

The main activities in the period under review focused on a mixed programme of performance and participatory projects in drama and theatre writing with regeneration objectives.

The strategies employed to assist the Charitable Company to meet these objectives included the following:

- Providing a range of services which reflect relevant quality standards and address the artistic policy of creating work which entertains its audiences and participants by giving voice to a range of contemporary experiences
- Focusing on the introduction of new ideas and ways of working
- Working towards raising and maintaining audience and participation levels by respecting the needs of these groups
- Working in partnership with Arts Council England North West

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2024 (continued)

The Ashton Group is a production led organisation. We operate a year round programme of weekly projects which are designed to mirror contemporary theatre industry practices. Our weekly sessions develop skills whilst being essentially about creating and producing new work. We work with professional artists to achieve this.

Our programme and our base are both called Theatre Factory.

Our core values are:

We put the young people who are our participants at the heart of the creative process. We produce contemporary theatre that engages with its audience by giving a platform to new and interesting voices from sectors of the community which are often overlooked. Our work is focussed around a core of projects including 2 age graded Youth Theatres and The Apprenticed Actors Touring Company which gives young people work experience.

Our work in 2023-2024 was focused on three areas:

1. Community
2. Youth
3. Talent Development – Young Professional Artists

1. Community Outreach

Activity 1 – Stories of Us

We ran creative writing and story making workshops with Dropzone LGBTQI+ Youth Group, resulting in a showcase performance at our Queer 4U Cabaret in September. We delivered creative workshops for PAUSE for Thought Group, Women's Community Matters resulting in art works, writing and performance based on the participants thoughts on identity and community.

We delivered sessions at Furness Multicultural Community Forum, including one to one sessions with young male refugees and asylum seekers, looking at their experiences of home, why they left, their journeys to the UK and their feelings about Barrow. In 2024-25 this will be worked into a working draft of a play outlining their stories.

We created a 'virtual high-street' for refugees and asylum seekers to practice their English language in an interactive setting, recreating real life conversations they might have on the high street/doctor's surgery/bus/café/library etc.

Partner Impact Statement:

I Feel like the creative writing sessions with Tabby Lamb helped our young people tap into their own abilities. Tabby's strategies and techniques were very inclusive and allowed and enabled all of our young people to take part and believe in themselves, regardless of their skill level or experience.

Lewis Benzie – LGBTQ+ Ambassador for Drop Zone Youth Projects.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2024 (continued)

Activity 2 – Live and Loud – *The Unseen Child*

Following last year's workshops with Furness Young Carers, we went on to make a show and an animation with the participants. *The Unseen Child* discussed the issues for children in families where there are siblings with additional needs, leading to those children feeling overlooked and invisible. The performances were hosted by Furness Carers Support and well attended. Feedback was very positive with evidence that the piece helped the audiences understanding of the issues faced by this sector of the community. The piece featured the animation that the participants had created with our team. The cast included members of our Youth Theatre working alongside a professional actor.

Audience Impact Statements:

I found it very emotional, revealing and full of love. I loved the interweaving of different stories and materials – puppetry, animation, storytelling, acting and music!

I loved the way you got to understand what was going on through the fantasy stories. Really clever.

I liked how it showed a real story to teach us to and make us more aware.

It was a very realistic and amazing way to represent struggles some people have in their day to day lives.

Activity 3 – New Partnerships

We began a new partnership with Horizon Studios and began the process of working with them on a Hip Hop musical around young men's mental health, *Lost and Found*. Five young men began writing with a young male writer, Matt King, and our male director, Phill Gregg. A draft script was produced, and the young men have written a suite of songs to fit into the text. Themes around mental health include an appraisal of the hold that Andrew Tait has on many young men. We consider this to be very important as we know from conversations with our partners that Tait's ideas are creating problems in schools with an increase in misogyny. We aim to complete the development period in 2024-25.

We began 2 new educational partnerships with St George's Primary and Ormsgill Primary to explore childrens' perception of the place they live, to celebrate where they live and build self-esteem and happiness.

Activity 4 – Let's Get Together

We ran a series of events in the community designed to bring people together around a creative activity to combat isolation and help network people into other 3rd sector services. We delivered *Queer 4 U* LGBTIQ+ cabaret, at Barrow Library in September and *The Unseen Child* at Nelson Street Community Centre in October. We did an additional project, a pre-Christmas 'sale' in November, of vintage and second-hand items, inviting members of the public to come and sell. We included a free book stall and refreshments. It proved popular, and so we plan to hold another one in Spring 2024. Lastly our newly formed IF! Writers continues to meet on the first Thursday of each month, and we also host Furness Word on all other Thursdays, providing a warm space, tea, coffee and biscuits for older people in the community. The group is slowly growing.

2. Youth

Activity 1 – Inclusive Youth Theatre

This is studio-based Youth Theatre. It is our main engine for engaging with neuro-divergent youth. There are 2 activity streams:

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2024 (continued)

Annual Production – Youth Theatre production

Our senior Youth Theatre performed their show, *Risky Business* at The Forum in February. It was about a community coming together to solve an issue, contributing to our ongoing aims of promoting community cohesion. Junior Youth Theatre hosted a games exchange for their families in which they led the activities, teaching parents and grandparents about improvisation.

Participant Impact Statements:

I am very lucky to come here and be who I want to be.
Theatre Factory provides me with the space to be myself and grow my confidence and voice.
I am always really happy to come every Thursday and can't wait to come for many more.
This place means so much to me.
To meet friends and talk about ideas for plays and to get a few hours away from my home.

‘Go and See’ – digital learning and collaborations.

Our Youth Theatre and Apprentices opened the *For, With, By* International Festival of Youth Theatre in Barrow in July. The Youth Theatre piece *Spaces in Between* was about rumour, false news and the responsibility to seek out and listen to the truth. Part of the project involved our participants in meeting and working with other companies from across the UK.

Activity 2 – Enviro Puppetry

Our learning from working with puppets through the pandemic is that they are powerfully effective with Autistic youth. We delivered workshops for young people from across the UK and Europe as part of the *For, With By* Festival and a three-day workshop series at AUTUS working with Autistic children and young people and upskilling their staff. We completed additional training towards this project with AUTUS.

Partner Impact Statements from AUTUS:

Our young people enjoyed creating, with one commenting that they are ‘proud’ of what they have done. Our young people that attended are highly creative. It was great that they could try things independently too!

One young person made a comment that this was the best Autus holiday activity yet. It was lovely to see personal barriers reduce and the young people to be comfortable around each other and the staff.

3. Talent Development

Activity 1 – Apprentices

The Apprentices is a paid work experience project for youth who want direct experience of working as actors. The Apprentices performed *Voices of Generation Zed* to audiences in Cumbria and across the Greater North. We held informal and formal feedback sessions with young audiences and gained a good sense of the concerns and priorities for young people from Merseyside to Northumberland. We added a new partnership to our roster, Bolton Octagon. All venues and partners want us to return in 2024-25 and the writers on the next project will be using that audience feedback to influence their work.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2024 (continued)

Participant Impact Statements:

New experience touring. New way of acting playing men. Having to make the backstory from little to nothing. Enjoyable experience and working with you all was a pleasure.

I've enjoyed being part of this with close friends. Experiencing a certain type and style of directing along with a different genre of performance.

I have learnt how to play characters with new ideas and personalities that I am not used to playing.

This experience has been very exciting and fun to work on. I feel I was able to play and explore a variety of roles and it has helped with broadening my range.

This experience has taught me about my acting skills and how to change my character quickly. I liked playing a male part to change how I play different genders and the characteristics of males. This experience has taught me about the industry and going on tour. Thank you for this experience!

Activity 2 – Community Influencers

This strand is for youth from marginalised groups, mainly neuro-divergent, who want to stretch out further into their community beyond Youth Theatre. This year they took our street puppets out on 6 occasions to festivals in Barrow, Ulverston and Whitehaven. They also supported our Senior Artists on projects at The Women’s Centre, Barrow Central Library, Ormsgill and in Barrow Park.

Activity 3 – Gen Zed Artists

Gen Zed Artists are young professional artists returning to the town after completing training. We give them work, space or project finance. This year we have commissioned 2 young artists, Kyra Scott (Kendal/Barrow) and Matt King (Dalton in Furness). Kyra has family in Barrow although she was brought up in Kendal. She is developing a performance in collaboration with young women in Barrow around mental health, self-care and wellbeing. Matt King is developing a script about creativity and the young mind. In addition, we are supporting a young Barrovian artist, Joe Rose, to apply to Arts Council England to make a piece of work about the positive impact of cycling on his mental health.

The Results

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

Number	Priority Ward	Age Group							Ethnicity					Disability		Gender			
		Early Years	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4	Key Stage 5	0-19 mixed	20+	Black/Black British	Asian/Asian British	White British	White Other	Mixed Heritage	Physical	Neuro Diverse	Male	Female	Non Binary
1504	390	0	2	182	30	23	11	779	477	38	84	1351	24	7	4	122	678	808	18
									1504						1504				

TOTAL ATTENDANCES 3195

The beneficiaries of our work are:

Children and young people between the ages of 7-25 living in Barrow-in-Furness, particularly those from the Priority Wards

LGBTQ+ young people in the Borough

Young people and vulnerable adults struggling with their mental health and well-being

Young people with additional needs (Autistic Spectrum conditions)

Young emerging artists from Barrow

Young people with caring responsibilities

Young people of diverse heritage and culture

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2024 (continued)

IMPACT

The key things that are being reported to us are:

1. People feel safe and nurtured because their ideas are listened to.
2. People are proud of their achievements.
3. People make friends in our sessions.
4. It is safe 'downtime' where they can be completely themselves.
5. The above 4 outcomes result in them feeling happy and optimistic.

In addition, our partner organisations value our work with their participants because it extends their offer and adds skills.

Many of our young people who attended can find new environments overwhelming, the Theatre Factory staff were accommodating and considerate of this. They let our young people take the lead in conversations and creations. It was lovely to see the connections between the young people and the TF staff by the end of the workshops. We are very grateful of this opportunity, thank you very much!

Staff member - AUTUS

CASE STUDY**Archie**

When we first met Archie some 7 years ago, he was 8 years old and in recovery from a brain bleed which nearly took his life. He had spent months and months in Alder Hey Hospital and his family were very concerned because Archie was left with issues: memory impairment, brain tiredness and the fear that he might experience the same thing again. He'd missed school and friends and in addition the family were dealing with the fact that Archie's mum, a single parent, has serious health issues and his grandma was supporting them all. They needed an activity where he could regain his confidence and make friends. An activity where he could explore his potential and grow back in a nurturing and unpressured setting.

Archie joined Junior Youth Theatre in 2017. Roughly half the children in that company had either neuro-diversity issues or English was not their first language. In his first show he played a newspaper seller, a character he devised himself. It was by no means certain that Archie would be able to remember the role or cope with the pressure that can sometimes come with performance. After that Archie did show after show with us and is now a central member of Senior Youth Theatre. Moreover, he is now taking part in productions alongside adult professional actors. He can learn substantial amounts of text, remember moves and blocking and, most importantly of all, make and sustain friendships.

Last year Archie lost his dad. The Youth Theatre and our staff were able to support Archie through this next challenging part of his life.

This is what his grandma says about the role of our programme in Archie's life:

This group has been a lifesaver almost for Archie. He loved going from the start - he had a bleed on the brain but recovered thank goodness and this group is like therapy for him. He loves everything about this group, and we are so grateful.

Finance

Our fundraising strategy continues to be underpinned by applying for multi-year grants wherever possible. This gives us certainty about the sustainability of our projects going forward and allows breathing space between applications to be able to consider which funders are most likely to be a good match for our work. This year was the first year of our new contract with Arts Council England, which provided a significant increase above the previous contract.

Although our fundraising has been successful, because of the demands of time and effort on the existing team making fundraising applications, and because there are more people trying to access the funds available, the Board agreed to bring in some outside expertise to help with the fundraising process. To this end they commissioned Good Fundraising to produce a report on and make recommendations about our fundraising process. As a result of this, we have begun a relationship with them to make applications on our behalf. We believe that as well as increasing our chance of successful applications, it will free up time for the Artistic Director to concentrate more on artistic content, strategy and partnership building for the future.

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

Page 8

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2024 (continued)

How do we view the artistic quality of the work produced and how was this assessed?

Innovation

We recognise the need to continually bring new ideas and influences to our work. This year we have brought in a number of new artists to work with both participants and creative team and we continue to value the work of artists who have worked with the company for a number of years.

Audience Audit

Throughout the year we have performed a Quality Audit with our public audiences.

Management ability

Our board continue to give the company good positive support.

What was the public benefit?

Our audiences and participation figures have held steady for the last 5 years.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2024 (continued)

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

The future strategy is to continue to build up free reserves through planned operating surpluses. However the Board is aware that it is unlikely that the target range can be reached for at least two or three years. For the short term the Board has also had to consider the extent to which existing activities and expenditure might have to cut back in order to operate within a smaller amount of available funds.

RISK REVIEW

The Board has in place a risk management strategy, which comprises:

- A quarterly review at board meetings of the risks the Charity may face;
- the establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate the risks identified in the plan; and
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the Charity should any of those risks materialise

The Board Members are particularly aware of the need to broaden the Charity's funding base, and to this end have commissioned Good Fundraising to review the fundraising operation. This strategy is informed by the need for the Charity to fulfil its financial obligations to staff and contractors. The reserves policy applies and will be followed as necessary. (see previous page).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Company law requires the Board Members to prepare financial statements that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity at the end of the financial year and of the surplus or deficit for the financial year.

In doing so the Board Members are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable 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 appropriate to presume that the Company is unable to continue its activities

The Board Members are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2024 (continued)

Acknowledgements

The Charity is grateful for the continued support of its funders in the period under review:

- Arts Council England (North West)
- National Lottery Know Your Neighbourhood Fund
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- Sir John Fisher Foundation
- National Lottery Awards for All
- Westmorland and Furness Council
- Barrow BID Grant
- Baywind Energy Community Trust

This report was approved by the Board on:

Date: -

3/12/24

and signed on its behalf by: - *Coum Aldred*

Coum Aldred

Signature of the
Chair of the Board

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE
 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY (Including Income and Expenditure Account)
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2024

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	Notes	Unrestricted Funds 2023-2024 £	Restricted Funds 2023-2024 £	Total Funds 2023-2024 £	Total Funds 2022-2023 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
<i>Incoming resources from charitable activities:</i>					
Grants towards arts projects	2	181269	83681	264950	195013
Contribution to equipment		-	-	-	-
Workshops and performances		-	-	-	-
Sundry Income				0	0
<i>Investment income and interest</i>		1129	-	1129	370
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		<u>182398</u>	<u>83681</u>	<u>266079</u>	<u>195383</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
<i>Cost of generating funds</i>					
Applying for funding and compliance costs	3	<u>3437</u>	<u>5154</u>	<u>8591</u>	<u>7022</u>
<i>Charitable activities</i>					
Projects, training and advice	4	155507	78527	234034	182684
<i>Governance costs</i>	4	<u>28049</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>28049</u>	<u>7415</u>
<i>Total cost of activities</i>	4	<u>183556</u>	<u>78527</u>	<u>262083</u>	<u>190099</u>
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		<u>186993</u>	<u>83681</u>	<u>270674</u>	<u>197121</u>
Net incoming (outgoings) resources before transfers		-4595	-	-4595	-1738
Gross transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS (net income for the year)		<u>-4595</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-4595</u>	<u>-1738</u>
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward at April 1 2023		64033	-	64033	65771
TOTAL FUNDS AT 31 MARCH 2024		<u><u>59438</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>59438</u></u>	<u><u>64033</u></u>

The statement of financial activities included all gains and losses in the year.

All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities

The note on pages 13 to 19 form part of these financial statements

**THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE
BALANCE SHEET AS AT MARCH 31 2024**

Page 12

	Notes	£	2024 £	£	2023 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	7		8403		2285
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	9	4342		4342	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>50306</u>		<u>60920</u>	
		54648		65262	
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due in one year	10	<u>3613</u>		<u>3514</u>	
Net current assets			51035		61748
NET ASSETS			<u>59438</u>		<u>64033</u>
FUNDS					
Unrestricted funds	16		59438		64033
Restricted funds			-		-
TOTAL FUNDS			<u>59438</u>		<u>64033</u>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under section 476 (1) of the Companies Act 2006.

For the year ended March 31 204 the Company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The members have not required the Company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

Approved by the Board of Directors on : - 3/12/24

And signed on their behalf by: -

Coum Aided

DIRECTOR

Coum Aided

The notes on pages 13 to 19 form part of these financial statements

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1 **Accounting policies**

The principle accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the requirements of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (the SORP), applicable accounting standards, the FRSSE and the Companies Act 2006.

Income resources

Income resources include grants that represent unrestricted funds for general purposes but also project grants that are restricted in use (see note 2). Income resources are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amounts are quantifiable. Income resources are included gross, (that is, before any deduction of related costs).

Incoming resources are sometime deferred, for example if fees or project grants have been received in advance of future accounting periods or if the donors and grantors impose pre-conditions that have not yet been met.

Incoming resources from workshops and performances are recognised as having been earned in the same period as when the related activities are provided (I.e. on a receivable basis).

Investment income is recognised on a receivable basis.

Any intangible income (e.g. comprising donated services) is included in income at a valuation which is an estimate of the financial cost borne by the donor but only where such a cost is quantifiable and measurable. No income is recognised when there is no financial cost borne by the third party.

Resources expended

All resources expended are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on an accruals basis and are listed under headings that aggregate all the costs related to that activity. Where costs cannot be directly attributed they are allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

The costs of generating funds include those costs incurred in applying for funding and compliance costs.

The costs of charitable activities include resources expended on performances and projects, touring, education and outreach work.

Governance costs include those costs incurred in connection with the management of the Charity.

Rehearsal costs, preparatory costs and production costs are recognised in the year in which they arise. Costs relating to productions not opened yet are carried forward as current assets at the year-end date.

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities as incurred over the term of the lease.

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset to a suitable residual value over its expected useful life, which in the case of an item of equipment is estimated at four years. Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £250 or where otherwise appropriate.

Fund accounting

Funds held by the Charitable company comprise either: -

~ **Unrestricted general funds** - these are funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the Trustees.

~ **Designated funds** - these are funds set aside from time to time by the Trustees out of unrestricted general funds for specific purposes or projects. (There are none currently designated).

~ **Restricted funds** - these are funds that can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular projects and restricted purposes.

Further explanations of the nature and purposes of each fund are included in the notes to the financial statements where necessary.

2 INCOMING RESOURCES	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
	Funds	Funds	Funds	Funds
	2023-2024	2023-2024	2023-2024	2022-2023
	£	£	£	£
Another Fine Fest	-	-	-	250
ACE Regular funded organisation grant	148790	500	149290	81975
The National Lottery Community Fund	-	50351	50351	48885
Art Gene Ltd - Lost Shops Project	5000	-	5000	13500
Art Gene Ltd - The Land to the Sky Project	-	-	-	500
Art Gene Ltd - Technical Hire	-	-	-	50
Sir John Fisher Foundation	15000	-	15000	15000
Donations	779	-	779	363
Women's Community Matters - Playcation	500	-	500	750
Cumbria County Council - NPO Support	-	-	-	10000
Cumbria County Council - St George's School Project	-	-	-	1200
The Garfield Weston Foundation	-	-	-	20000
Boom Dang	-	580	580	540
Rosehill Theatre	200	-	200	-
Granada Foundation CF Grant	-	-	-	2000
National Lottery Know Your Neighbourhood Fund	-	17250	17250	-
Baywind Energy Community Trust	-	5000	5000	-
Westmorland and Furness Council	10000	-	10000	-
National Lottery Awards for All	-	10000	10000	-
Barrow BID Grant	1000	-	1000	-
Total incoming resources	181269	83681	264950	195013

3 COST OF GENERATING FUNDS

Gross pay - salaries and wages	2623	3934	6557	5240
Social Security costs	156	234	390	362
Employees pension	54	80	134	134
Rent	295	443	738	785
Charity business rates and water rates	12	18	30	25
Light and heat	48	72	120	92
Insurances	57	86	143	180
Repairs and maintenance	90	135	225	82
Telephone and communications	10	15	25	24
Printing, stationery and postage	12	17	29	35
Office expenses	24	36	60	25
Bank charges	0	0	0	0
Depreciation	56	84	140	38
Total Cost of Generating Funds	3437	5154	8591	7022

4 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	DIRECT	SUPPORT	GOVERNANCE	Total 2023-2024 £	Total 2022-2023 £
	COSTS	COSTS	COSTS		
	ALLOCATED TO ACTIVITIES £	ALLOCATED TO ACTIVITIES £	£		
Gross pay - salaries and wages	105899	12459	6229	124587	99549
Social Security costs	6311	743	371	7425	6869
Employees Pension	2165	255	127	2547	2547
Fees payable	60923	-	-	60923	36947
Production costs	4557	-	-	4557	3580
Accommodation on tour	6272	-	-	6272	4209
Travel and subsistence	6041	-	-	6041	9187
Publicity	1152	-	-	1152	2025
Rent	11928	1403	702	14033	14920
Charity business rates and water	481	57	28	566	468
Light and heat	1933	227	114	2274	1756
Insurances	2320	273	136	2729	3436
Repairs and maintenance	3629	427	213	4269	1549
Telephone and communications	404	47	24	475	458
Printing, stationery and postage	471	55	28	554	660
Office expenses	963	113	57	1133	468
Bank charges				0	0
Depreciation	2260	266	133	2659	726
Annual Report	-	-	747	747	747
Filing fees	-	-	-	0	-
Legal fees	-	-	19140	19140	-
Totals to Statement of Activities	<u>217709</u>	<u>16325</u>	<u>28049</u>	<u>262083</u>	<u>190099</u>

5 NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

Net movement in funds is stated after charging: -

	2023-2024	2022-2023
Reporting accountants' remuneration: -	£	£
Annual report and book-keeping fees	747	747
Incorporation and advice	-	-
Depreciation of fixed assets	570	761
Operating lease rentals	14771	15705
Number of Trustees reimbursed	-	-
Directors' remuneration and trustees' expenses	-	-

6 STAFF COSTS AND NUMBERS	2023-2024	2022-2023
	£	£
Gross salaries	131145	104789
Social security costs	7816	7231
	<u>138961</u>	<u>107519</u>

The average weekly number of staff including secondees during the period calculated on the basis of full-time equivalents was:-

	No.	No.
Direct charitable and support	3.8	1.8
Fundraising and publicity	0.35	0.1
Management and administration	0.35	0.1
	<u>4.5</u>	<u>2.0</u>

No employee or secondee received emoluments of more than £60000.

7 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS	Project and office equipment	March 2024 Total
	£	£
Cost: -		
As at April 1 2023	29474	29474
Additions	8917	8917
Disposals	-	-
As at March 31 2024	<u>38391</u>	<u>38391</u>
Depreciation: -		
As at April 1 2023	27189	27189
Charge for the year	2799	2799
Disposals	-	-
As at March 31 2024	<u>29988</u>	<u>29988</u>
Net Book Value: -		
As at March 31 2024	<u>8403</u>	<u>8403</u>
<i>Net Book Value: -</i>		
<i>As at March 31 2023</i>	<u>2285</u>	<u>2285</u>
	Furniture and office equipment	Furniture and office equipment
The net book value at March 2024 represents assets for:	£	£
Shared activities	<u>8403</u>	<u>8403</u>

8 CAPITAL COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

There were no capital commitments at the balance sheet date nor any contingent liabilities

	March 2024 Total £	March 2023 Total £
9 DEBTORS		
Grants and fees receivable	4342	4342
Prepayments and accrued box office income	-	
Total Debtors	<u>4342</u>	<u>4342</u>

	£	£
10 CREDITORS		
Amounts falling due within one year: -		
Creditors	0	0
Social security and other taxes	2615	2516
Accruals	998	998
Deferred Income	0	0
Total Creditors	<u>3613</u>	<u>3514</u>

11 CONSTITUTION

The Company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. In the event of the Company being wound up the members are committed to contributing £1 each.

12 TRANSACTIONS WITH DIRECTORS

There are no transaction with Directors which require to be disclosed under the FRSSE.

13 TAXATION

The Company is a registered charity and is entitled to claim annual exemption from UK corporation tax.

14 OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

At the balance sheet date the Company had the following annual commitments on leases expiring: -

	2024 Land £	2024 Other £	2023 Land £	2023 Other £
Within two and five years	-	-	-	-
Beyond five years	<u>14771</u>	-	<u>15705</u>	-

15 STATEMENT OF FUNDS	Balance Apr-23 £	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Transfers between Funds £	Balance Mar-24 £
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	64033	182398	(186993)	-	59438
	<u>64033</u>	<u>182398</u>	<u>(186993)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>59438</u>
Restricted funds					
Project grants and project costs	-	83681	(83681)	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>83681</u>	<u>(83681)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>64033</u>	<u>266079</u>	<u>(277361)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>59438</u>

16 Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at March 31 2023 are represented by	Restricted funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	8403	8403
Current assets	-	54648	54648
Current liabilities	-	(3613)	(3613)
	<u>-</u>	<u>59438</u>	<u>59438</u>

**ACCOUNTANT'S REPORTS TO THE MEMBERS ON THE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
OF THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2024**

Page 20

We report on the financial statements for the year ended March 31 2024 set out on pages 11 to 12.

Respective responsibilities of Directors and Reporting Accountants

The Company's Board is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and they consider that the company is exempt from an audit. It is our responsibility to carry out procedures designed to enable us to report our opinion.

Basis of opinion

Our work was conducted in accordance with the Statement of Standards for Reporting Accountants and so our procedures consisted of comparing the financial statements with the accounting records kept by the Committee and making such limited enquiries of the officers of the Association as we considered necessary for the purposes of this report. These procedures provide only the assurance expressed in our opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion :

(a) the financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records kept by the Charity under Section 386 of the Companies Act 2006;

(b) having regard only to, and on the basis of, the information contained in those accounting records :

(i) the financial statements have been drawn up in a manner consistent with the accounting requirements specified in Section 393 of the Act;

(ii) the Charity satisfied the conditions for exemption from an audit of the financial statements for the year specified in Section 477(2) of the Act and did not, at any time within that year, fall within any of the categories of companies not entitled to the exemption specified in Section 276(1).

Ad Valorem North
Second Floor, Ramsden House
121 - 123 Duke street
Barrow-in-Furness
Cumbria
LA14 1XA

Date:

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

England & Wales - Charity number 1103877

Accounts

Company Number 04941112

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

(A company limited by guarantee)

**ANNUAL REPORT
and
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2023

Charity Number: 1103877

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE
(A company limited by guarantee)

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2023

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Notes forming part of the financial statements	13
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Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: The Ashton Group Theatre
Charity Number: 1103877
Company Number: 04941112
Registered Office and operational address: 1st Floor, The Cooke's Studios, 104 Abbey Road
Barrow in Furness, Cumbria, LA14 5QR

Board Members at date of approval of this report:

Colin Vaughan Aldred	Hayley Louise Preston
Doreen Floyd	Jackie Ann Drake
Janice Benson	Michel Hudson

Company Secretary: Rachel Ashton

Charity Correspondence: Rachel Ashton

Artistic Director: Rachel Ashton

Reporting Accountants: Ad Valorem North Limited
Second Floor, Ramsden House
121 – 123 Duke Street
Barrow-in-Furness
Cumbria
LA14 1XA

Bankers: Co-Operative Bank
PO Box 250
Delf House
Southway
Skelmersdale
WN8 6WT

www.theatrefactory.org

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2023

The Board of Directors is pleased to present its Annual Report and unaudited financial statements for the year ended March 31 2023.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

The Ashton Group Theatre is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on October 22 2003 and registered as a charity on May 21 2004. The Charitable Company lay dormant until April 1 2005. It was incorporated with reference to a Memorandum of Association, which established the objects and powers of the Charitable Company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the Charitable Company being wound up the members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

Recruitment and Appointment of Board Members

The Directors of the Company are also the Charity Trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the Company's articles are known as Members of the Board (or Board of Management). Under section 34 of the Articles the Board are deemed to have been appointed for a term of three years. This period may be extended by a further appointment to a second term of again three years. However, following six years of service Board Members must stand down for a period of at least one year. Upon the expiry of this one-year the six-year cycle may begin once more.

The Board seeks to ensure that the needs of the Charitable Company's users and beneficiaries are appropriately reflected through the diversity of people elected as Board Members. The Board tries to provide a broad mix of skills amongst the Board Members as a group. Prospective Board Members are encouraged to attend events and familiarise themselves with the Charitable Company's activities and the context within which it operates.

Objectives and Activities

The Charitable Company's objects and principal activities are to promote, maintain, improve and advance education of the public in the art of drama and the other arts to encourage the development of drama through drama productions and educational workshop programmes.

The main activities in the period under review focused on a mixed programme of performance and participatory projects in drama and theatre writing with regeneration objectives.

The strategies employed to assist the Charitable Company to meet these objectives included the following:

-

- Providing a range of services which reflect relevant quality standards and address the artistic policy of creating work which entertains its audiences and participants by giving voice to a range of contemporary experiences
- Focusing on the introduction of new ideas and ways of working
- Working towards raising and maintaining audience and participation levels by respecting the needs of these groups
- Working in partnership with Arts Council England North West

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2023 (continued)

The Ashton Group is a production led organisation. We operate a year round programme of weekly projects which are designed to mirror contemporary theatre industry practices. Our weekly sessions develop skills whilst being essentially about creating and producing new work. We work with professional artists to achieve this.

Our programme and our base are both called Theatre Factory.

Our core values are:

We put the young people who are our participants at the heart of the creative process.

We produce contemporary theatre that engages with its audience by giving a platform to new and interesting voices from sectors of the community which are often overlooked.

Our work is focussed around a core of projects including 2 age graded Youth Theatres and The Apprenticed Actors Touring Company which gives young people work experience.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2023 (continued)

Our 2022/23 Programme comprised

1. Community Outreach (TF Community)
2. Youth (TF Youth)
3. Talent Development – Young Professional Artists (TF Producers, TF Apprentices, TF Associates)

1. Community Outreach

Our programme in the community was co-curated with partnership organisations. The Community Programme was as follows:

Furness Young Carers

In November 2021 we were asked to partner Furness Carers to create a drama project capturing the lived experience of young people with caring responsibilities in the Furness area. We delivered 19 drama sessions in partnership

Storysilience

In November 2021 we were approached by Cumbria Development Education Centre (C-DEC) to be delivery partners on Storysilience, a project part funded by Erasmus, to uncover stories of resilience in our communities and shared across 4 territories: Cumbria, Tower Hamlets, Slovenia and Turkey. We created a short film with participants about their experiences of isolation during the COVID pandemic

Queer In Furness (QUIF) – Tabby Lamb

Over the last 3 years we have developed a good working relationship with the Furness LGBTQI+ Youth Group at Dropzone. In March 2023 we host a workshop with Queer theatre maker, Tabby Lamb for Dropzone. Tabby's work is about empowering young people to define and own their own cultural output based firmly in their lived experience as Queer Youth. 1 session, 50 participants

A Queer Evening

We created a Queer Cabaret with participants. It sold out at Barrow Library with 80 people attending. It provided a safe space to socialise and creative activity to LGBTQI youth and their allies.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2023 (continued)

Educational Partners

The company worked with St George's Primary in 2022-23 to design weekly sessions aimed at boosting young people deemed to be needing additional focus. 30 young people.

Community Response

We kept a flexible fund to react to requests for support from key front-line organisations in our community. We delivered 13 sessions to 430 participants. Partners were Barrowful, Art-Genie, Women's Community Matters, Furness Multicultural Community Forum, Furness Youth Pride

Lost Shops - Community Musical

In March we presented a community made musical show based on women's memories of working in the Banking Industries in Barrow from the 60's to the 90's which charts the changes in women's working lives and the role of money in all our lives. It was called *Follow the Money*, and was a collaboration with South Lakes Rock and Pop Choir and involved a community cast of around 40. Sessions have run all year.

2. Youth

Youth Theatre

We delivered 65 sessions with 43 participants culminating in 2 different shows at Christmas. We also hosted workshops from visiting company, Open Theatre, autism specialists.

Puppetry

Polish puppet maker Jan Siwilewicz joined Theatre Factory in 2022-23 to stimulate the devising process with Youth Theatre. Jan shares heritage with a number of our Youth Theatre members and this had a galvanising effect on those members.

3.Talent Development

Young Producers

Another of our puppets, the 'Hugel', performed at 4 festivals over the summer (Unity, Pride, Coastroads, Another Fine Fest) engaging hundreds of young people and families as audience members and giving paid work, production and public engagement experience to our crew of Young Producers

Young Associates

We gave work to 8 young Furness artists in: community youth choreography, song writing, production, directing, acting, business and film-making

Apprentices - Voices of Generation Zed

The 2022-23 TF Apprentices production toured the North and featured gender-blind casting. 2 of the pieces in the portfolio show were filmed and disseminated nationally. One of them will be used as a discussion tool for young carers. This gave paid work to 8 young emerging people aged 16-25

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2023 (continued)

Beneficiaries

The needs of the young people and vulnerable adults we work with are for safe, nurturing, inclusive environments in which to partake in creative activity which will boost their self-esteem, confidence, functionality, and self-worth. They need a place to make friends and develop those friendships, particularly those who are neuro atypical. We aim to help young people and vulnerable adults to feel:

- less lonely, more connected, able to make friends
- proud of their achievements (better self-esteem)
- more hopeful
- valued.

Children and young people between the ages of 7-25 living in Barrow-in-Furness – 557 of which 382 were from Priority Wards

Adults - 84

LGBTQ+ young people in the Borough – 117

Young people and vulnerable adults struggling with their mental health and well-being – 30

Young people with additional needs (Autistic Spectrum conditions) – 40

Young emerging artists from Barrow – 6

Young people with caring responsibilities – 31

Young people of diverse heritage and culture – 45

Male - 216

Female - 405

Non-Binary - 20

Number of sessions - 296

Number of attendances - 1798

Key stage 1 - 5

Key stage 2 - 78

Key stage 3 - 45

Key stage 4 - 21

Key stage 5 - 16

Mixed aged group 0-19 - 392

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2023 (continued)

How do we view the artistic quality of the work produced and how was this assessed?

Innovation

We recognise the need to continually bring new ideas and influences to our work. This year we have brought in a number of new artists to work with both participants and creative team and we continue to value the work of artists who have worked with the company for a number of years.

Audience Audit

Throughout the year we have performed a Quality Audit with our public audiences.

Management ability

Our board continue to give the company good positive support.

What was the public benefit?

Our audiences and participation figures have held steady for the last 5 years.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2023 (continued)

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

The future strategy is to continue to build up free reserves through planned operating surpluses. However the Board is aware that it is unlikely that the target range can be reached for at least two or three years. For the short term the Board has also had to consider the extent to which existing activities and expenditure might have to cut back in order to operate within a smaller amount of available funds.

RISK REVIEW

The Board has in place a risk management strategy, which comprises:

- an annual review of the risks the Charity may face;
- the establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate the risks identified in the plan; and
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the Charity should any of those risks materialise

The Board Members are particularly aware of the need to broaden the Charity's funding base, and to this end have commissioned Good Fundraising to review the fundraising operation. They will report in the latter part of 2023 and the Board will then oversee the implementation of any changes that are recommended and will commission Good Fundraising to supplement the fundraising activities of the Management Team.

This strategy is informed by the need for the Charity to fulfil its financial obligations to staff and contractors. The reserves policy applies and will be followed as necessary. (see previous page).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Company law requires the Board Members to prepare financial statements that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity at the end of the financial year and of the surplus or deficit for the financial year.

In doing so the Board Members are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable 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 appropriate to presume that the Company is unable to continue its activities

The Board Members are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2023 (continued)

Acknowledgements

The Charity is grateful for the continued support of its funders in the period under review:

- Arts Council England (North West)
- Cumbria County Council
- The National Lottery Community Fund
- Sir John Fisher Foundation
- The Garfield Weston Foundation

This report was approved by the Board on:

Date: - 30/10/23

and signed on its behalf by: -

COLIN ADELTS
Colin Adelts

Signature of the
Chair of the Board

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY (Including Income and Expenditure Account)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2023

Page 11

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds 2022-2023 £	Restricted Funds 2022-2023 £	Total Funds 2022-2023 £	Total Funds 2021-2022 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
<i>Incoming resources from charitable activities:</i>					
Grants towards arts projects	2	143588	51425	195013	178678
Contribution to equipment		-	-	-	-
Workshops and performances		-	-	-	-
Sundry Income				0	0
<i>Investment income and interest</i>		370	-	370	42
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		<u>143958</u>	<u>51425</u>	<u>195383</u>	<u>178720</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
<i>Cost of generating funds</i>					
Applying for funding and compliance costs	3	<u>2810</u>	<u>4212</u>	<u>7022</u>	<u>6794</u>
<i>Charitable activities</i>					
Projects, training and advice	4	<u>135471</u>	<u>47213</u>	<u>182684</u>	<u>179416</u>
<i>Governance costs</i>	4	<u>7415</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7415</u>	<u>7199</u>
<i>Total cost of activities</i>	4	<u>142886</u>	<u>47213</u>	<u>190099</u>	<u>186615</u>
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		<u>145696</u>	<u>51425</u>	<u>197121</u>	<u>193409</u>
Net incoming (outgoings) resources before transfers		-1738	-	-1738	-14689
Gross transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS (net income for the year)		<u>-1738</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-1738</u>	<u>-14689</u>
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward at April 1 2022		65771	-	65771	80460
TOTAL FUNDS AT 31 MARCH 2023		<u>64033</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>64033</u>	<u>65771</u>

The statement of financial activities included all gains and losses in the year.

All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities

The note on pages 13 to 19 form part of these financial statements

**THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE
BALANCE SHEET AS AT MARCH 31 2023**

Page 12

	Notes	£	2022 £	£	2021 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	7		2285		3046
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	9	4342		4342	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>60920</u>		<u>81737</u>	
		65262		86079	
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due in one year	10	<u>3514</u>		<u>23354</u>	
Net current assets			61748		62725
NET ASSETS			<u><u>64033</u></u>		<u><u>65771</u></u>
FUNDS					
Unrestricted funds	16		64033		65771
Restricted funds			-		-
TOTAL FUNDS			<u><u>64033</u></u>		<u><u>65771</u></u>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under section 476 (1) of the Companies Act 2006.

For the year ended March 31 2023 the Company was entitled to exemption under section 476(1) of the Companies Act 2006. No members have required the Company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 477(1).

The Directors acknowledge their responsibility for :-

- i) ensuring the Company keeps accounting records which comply with section 386; and
- ii) preparing accounts which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company as at the end of its income and expenditure for the financial year in accordance with section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act relating to the accounts, so far as applicable to the Company.

Approved by the Board of Directors on :-

30/10/23

And signed on their behalf by:-

COLIN ADDED

Colin Added

DIRECTOR

The notes on pages 13 to 19 form part of these financial statements

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1 **Accounting policies**

The principle accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the requirements of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (the SORP), applicable accounting standards, the FRSSE and the Companies Act 2006.

Income resources

Income resources include grants that represent unrestricted funds for general purposes but also project grants that are restricted in use (see note 2). Income resources are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amounts are quantifiable. Income resources are included gross, (that is, before any deduction of related costs).

Incoming resources are sometime deferred, for example if fees or project grants have been received in advance of future accounting periods or if the donors and grantors impose pre-conditions that have not yet been met.

Incoming resources from workshops and performances are recognised as having been earned in the same period as when the related activities are provided (I.e. on a receivable basis).

Investment income is recognised on a receivable basis.

Any intangible income (e.g. comprising donated services) is included in income at a valuation which is an estimate of the financial cost borne by the donor but only where such a cost is quantifiable and measurable. No income is recognised when there is no financial cost borne by the third party.

Resources expended

All resources expended are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on an accruals basis and are listed under headings that aggregate all the costs related to that activity. Where costs cannot be directly attributed they are allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

The costs of generating funds include those costs incurred in applying for funding and compliance costs.

The costs of charitable activities include resources expended on performances and projects, touring, education and outreach work.

Governance costs include those costs incurred in connection with the management of the Charity.

Rehearsal costs, preparatory costs and production costs are recognised in the year in which they arise. Costs relating to productions not opened yet are carried forward as current assets at the year-end date.

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1 **Accounting policies (continued)**

Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities as incurred over the term of the lease.

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset to a suitable residual value over its expected useful life, which in the case of an item of equipment is estimated at four years. Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £250 or where otherwise appropriate.

Fund accounting

Funds held by the Charitable company comprise either: -

- ~ **Unrestricted general funds** - these are funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the Trustees.
- ~ **Designated funds** - these are funds set aside from time to time by the Trustees out of unrestricted general funds for specific purposes or projects. (There are none currently designated).
- ~ **Restricted funds** - these are funds that can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular projects and restricted purposes.

Further explanations of the nature and purposes of each fund are included in the notes to the financial statements where necessary.

2 INCOMING RESOURCES	Unrestricted Funds 2022-2023 £	Restricted Funds 2022-2023 £	Total Funds 2022-2023 £	Total Funds 2021-2022 £
Another Fine Fest	250	-	250	0
ACE Regular funded organisation grant	81975	-	81975	81975
The National Lottery Community Fund	-	48885	48885	49017
Art Gene Ltd - Lost Shops Project	13500	-	13500	-
Art Gene Ltd - The Land to the Sky Project	500	-	500	-
Art Gene Ltd - Technical Hire	50	-	50	-
Sir John Fisher Foundation	15000	-	15000	15000
Donations	363	-	363	86
Women's Community Matters - Barrowful Project	750	-	750	-
Cumbria County Council - NPO Support	10000	-	10000	10000
Cumbria County Council - St George's School Project	1200	-	1200	-
The Garfield Weston Foundation	20000	-	20000	20000
Barra Culture	-	-	-	600
High Street Action Zone	-	-	-	2000
Boom Dang	-	540	540	-
Granada Foundation CF Grant	-	2000	2000	-
Total incoming resources	<u>143588</u>	<u>51425</u>	<u>195013</u>	<u>178678</u>

3 COST OF GENERATING FUNDS

Gross pay - salaries and wages	2096	3144	5240	5117
Social Security costs	145	217	362	260
Employees pension	54	80	134	134
Rent	314	471	785	720
Charity business rates and water rates	10	15	25	117
Light and heat	37	55	92	80
Insurances	72	108	180	140
Repairs and maintenance	33	49	82	73
Telephone and communications	10	14	24	27
Printing, stationery and postage	14	21	35	48
Office expenses	10	15	25	28
Bank charges	0	0	0	0
Depreciation	15	23	38	50
Total Cost of Generating Funds	<u>2810</u>	<u>4212</u>	<u>7022</u>	<u>5773</u>

4 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	DIRECT	SUPPORT	GOVERNANCE	Total 2022-2023 £	Total 2021-2022 £
	COSTS	COSTS	COSTS		
	ALLOCATED TO ACTIVITIES £	ALLOCATED TO ACTIVITIES £	£		
Gross pay - salaries and wages	84617	9955	4977	99549	97213
Social Security costs	5839	687	343	6869	4931
Employees Pension	2165	255	127	2547	2547
Fees payable	36947	-	-	36947	42089
Production costs	3580	-	-	3580	5783
Accommodation on tour	4209	-	-	4209	2490
Travel and subsistence	9187	-	-	9187	3360
Publicity	2025	-	-	2025	3091
Rent	12682	1492	746	14920	13666
Charity business rates and water	398	47	23	468	2219
Light and heat	1492	176	88	1756	1527
Insurances	2920	344	172	3436	2667
Repairs and maintenance	1317	155	77	1549	1382
Telephone and communications	389	46	23	458	502
Printing, stationery and postage	561	66	33	660	912
Office expenses	398	47	23	468	524
Bank charges				0	0
Depreciation	615	72	36	723	963
Annual Report	-	-	747	747	747
Filing fees	-	-	-	-	-
Legal fees	-	-	-	-	-
Totals to Statement of Activities	<u>169341</u>	<u>13342</u>	<u>7415</u>	<u>190099</u>	<u>139095</u>

5 NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

Net movement in funds is stated after charging: -

	2022-2023	2021-2022
Reporting accountants' remuneration: -	£	£
Annual report and book-keeping fees	747	747
Incorporation and advice	-	-
Depreciation of fixed assets	761	1014
Operating lease rentals	15705	14385
Number of Trustees reimbursed	-	-
Directors' remuneration and trustees' expenses	-	-

6 STAFF COSTS AND NUMBERS

	2022-2023	2021-2022
	£	£
Gross salaries	104789	102329
Social security costs	7231	5190
	<u>112020</u>	<u>107519</u>

The average weekly number of staff including secondees during the period calculated on the basis of full-time equivalents was:-

	No.	No.
Direct charitable and support	1.8	1.8
Fundraising and publicity	0.1	0.1
Management and administration	0.1	0.1
	<u>2.0</u>	<u>2.0</u>

No employee or secondee received emoluments of more than £60000.

7 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Project and office equipment £	March 2023 Total £
Cost: -		
As at April 1 2022	29474	29474
Additions		
Disposals	-	-
As at March 31 2023	<u>29474</u>	<u>29474</u>
Depreciation: -		
As at April 1 2022	26428	26428
Charge for the year	761	761
Disposals	-	-
As at March 31 2023	<u>27189</u>	<u>27189</u>
Net Book Value: -		
As at March 31 2023	<u>2285</u>	<u>2285</u>
<i>Net Book Value: -</i>		
<i>As at March 31 2022</i>	<u>3046</u>	<u>3046</u>
	Furniture and office equipment £	Furniture and office equipment £
The net book value at March 2023 represents assets for:	2285	2285
Shared activities	<u>2285</u>	<u>2285</u>

8 CAPITAL COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

There were no capital commitments at the balance sheet date nor any contingent liabilities

	March 2023 Total £	March 2022 Total £
9 DEBTORS		
Grants and fees receivable	4342	4342
Prepayments and accrued box office income	-	
Total Debtors	<u>4342</u>	<u>4342</u>

10 CREDITORS

Amounts falling due within one year: -

	£	£
Creditors	0	0
Social security and other taxes	2516	2356
Accruals	998	998
Deferred Income	0	20000
Total Creditors	<u>3514</u>	<u>23354</u>

11 CONSTITUTION

The Company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. In the event of the Company being wound up the members are committed to contributing £1 each.

12 TRANSACTIONS WITH DIRECTORS

There are no transaction with Directors which require to be disclosed under the FRSSE.

13 TAXATION

The Company is a registered charity and is entitled to claim annual exemption from UK corporation tax.

14 OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

At the balance sheet date the Company had the following annual commitments on leases expiring: -

	2023 Land £	2023 Other £	2022 Land £	2022 Other £
Within two and five years	-	-	-	-
Beyond five years	<u>15705</u>	-	<u>14385</u>	-

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2023

Page 19

15 STATEMENT OF FUNDS	Balance Apr-22 £	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Transfers between Funds £	Balance Mar-23 £
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	65771	143958	(145696)	-	64033
	<u>65771</u>	<u>143958</u>	<u>(145696)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>64033</u>
Restricted funds					
Project grants and project costs	-	51425	(51425)	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>51425</u>	<u>(51425)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>65771</u>	<u>195383</u>	<u>(197121)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>64033</u>

16 Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at March 31 2022 are represented by	Restricted funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	2285	2285
Current assets	-	65262	65262
Current liabilities	-	(3514)	(23354)
	<u>-</u>	<u>64033</u>	<u>64033</u>

**ACCOUNTANT'S REPORTS TO THE MEMBERS ON THE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
OF THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2023**

Page 20

We report on the financial statements for the year ended March 31 2023 set out on pages 11 to 12.

Respective responsibilities of Directors and Reporting Accountants

The Company's Board is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and they consider that the company is exempt from an audit. It is our responsibility to carry out procedures designed to enable us to report our opinion.

Basis of opinion

Our work was conducted in accordance with the Statement of Standards for Reporting Accountants and so our procedures consisted of comparing the financial statements with the accounting records kept by the Committee and making such limited enquiries of the officers of the Association as we considered necessary for the purposes of this report. These procedures provide only the assurance expressed in our opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion :

- (a) the financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records kept by the Charity under Section 386 of the Companies Act 2006;
- (b) having regard only to, and on the basis of, the information contained in those accounting records :
 - (I) the financial statements have been drawn up in a manner consistent with the accounting requirements specified in Section 393 of the Act;
 - (ii) the Charity satisfied the conditions for exemption from an audit of the financial statements for the year specified in Section 477(2) of the Act and did not, at any time within that year, fall within any of the categories of companies not entitled to the exemption specified in Section 276(1).

Ad Valorem North
Second Floor, Ramsden House
121 - 123 Duke street
Barrow-in-Furness
Cumbria
LA14 1XA

Date:

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

England & Wales - Charity number 1103877

Accounts

Company Number 04941112

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

(A company limited by guarantee)

**ANNUAL REPORT
and
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2022

Charity Number: 1103877

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE
(A company limited by guarantee)
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2022

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THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

Page 1

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: The Ashton Group Theatre
Charity Number: 1103877
Company Number: 04941112
Registered Office and operational address: 1st Floor, The Cooke's Studios, 104 Abbey Road
Barrow in Furness, Cumbria, LA14 5QR

Board Members at date of approval of this report:

Colin Vaughan Aldred	Hayley Louise Preston
Doreen Floyd	Jackie Ann Drake
Janice Benson	Dr Hayley Jo Anne Willacy

Company Secretary: Rachel Ashton

Charity Correspondence: Rachel Ashton

Artistic Director: Rachel Ashton

Reporting Accountants: Ad Valorem (Northern) Limited
Second Floor, Ramsden House
121 – 123 Duke Street
Barrow-in-Furness
Cumbria
LA14 1XA

Bankers: Co-Operative Bank
PO Box 250
Delf House
Southway
Skelmersdale
WN8 6WT

www.theatrefactory.org

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2022

The Board of Directors is pleased to present its Annual Report and unaudited financial statements for the year ended March 31 2022.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

The Ashton Group Theatre is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on October 22 2003 and registered as a charity on May 21 2004. The Charitable Company lay dormant until April 1 2005. It was incorporated with reference to a Memorandum of Association, which established the objects and powers of the Charitable Company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the Charitable Company being wound up the members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

Recruitment and Appointment of Board Members

The Directors of the Company are also the Charity Trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the Company's articles are known as Members of the Board (or Board of Management). Under section 34 of the Articles the Board are deemed to have been appointed for a term of three years. This period may be extended by a further appointment to a second term of again three years. However, following six years of service Board Members must stand down for a period of at least one year. Upon the expiry of this one-year the six-year cycle may begin once more.

The Board seeks to ensure that the needs of the Charitable Company's users and beneficiaries are appropriately reflected through the diversity of people elected as Board Members. The Board tries to provide a broad mix of skills amongst the Board Members as a group. Prospective Board Members are encouraged to attend events and familiarise themselves with the Charitable Company's activities and the context within which it operates.

Objectives and Activities

The Charitable Company's objects and principle activities are to promote, maintain, improve and advance education of the public in the art of drama and the other arts to encourage the development of drama through drama productions and educational workshop programmes.

The main activities in the period under review focused on a mixed programme of performance and participatory projects in drama and theatre writing with regeneration objectives.

The strategies employed to assist the Charitable Company to meet these objectives included the following:

- Providing a range of services which reflect relevant quality standards and address the artistic policy of creating work which entertains its audiences and participants by giving voice to a range of contemporary experiences
- Focusing on the introduction of new ideas and ways of working
- Working towards raising and maintaining audience and participation levels by respecting the needs of these groups
- Working in partnership with Arts Council England North West

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2022 (continued)

The Ashton Group is a production led organisation. We operate a year round programme of weekly projects which are designed to mirror contemporary theatre industry practices. Our weekly sessions develop skills whilst being essentially about creating and producing new work. We work with professional artists to achieve this.

Our programme and our base are both called Theatre Factory.

Our core values are:

We put the young people who are our participants at the heart of the creative process.

We produce contemporary theatre that engages with its audience by giving a platform to new and interesting voices from sectors of the community which are often overlooked.

Our work is focussed around a core of projects including 2 age graded Youth Theatres and The Apprenticed Actors Touring Company which gives young people work experience.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2022 (continued)

This year our annual programme of activities was targeted to support children and young people and their families in Barrow, and specifically to help people through this second year of pandemic. The needs were various but the overarching story was mental health and well-being.

We set out to provide a service which would allow children, young people and their families to:

- Reconnect and socialise in a safe and nurturing environment.
- Have fun
- Regain some lost confidence

All our projects achieved this. The engagement figures for this year are huge compared with previous years and we made this happen by changing the way we work from studio and building based to more outdoor work backed up with online activity where necessary.

We delivered to approximately 2150 children, young people, and vulnerable adults in the Borough. Some of this was done outside, some digitally, some in our own studio and some in partnership with: Women's Community Matters, Dropzone LGBTQI+ Youth, Love Barrow Families, Furness Multi-Cultural Community Forum and St George's Church of England Primary School. There were between 4 and 7 sessions weekly depending on the time of year. Each session was between 1 and 3 hours in length depending on the age group and need.

The participants were as follows:

1453 Residents of priority wards
864 Male
1245 Female
41 non-binary
2074 White British
35 Black/Black British
27 Asian/British Asian
7 White (Other)
7 Mixed heritage
8 Physical disability
50 Neuro diverse
159 Early Years
434 Key stage 1
363 Key stage 2
15 Key stage 3
44 Key stage 4
41 Key stage 5
29 0-19 mixed
1065 20+

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2022 (continued)

We delivered:

1. Youth Theatre - twice a week throughout the year with Christmas online presentations. Now 50% neuro diverse

2. LGBTQ youth projects - Queer Joy workshops with theatre practitioner Tabby Lamb, and a project on 'Polari', the historic Queer language (partnership with Dropzone)

3. Puppetry project with vulnerable women (partnership with Women's Community Matters)

4. Puppetry project with Love Barrow Families residents of Hindpool, Longways and Smeaton Street

5. Summer activities from PAUSE girl's group (partnership Women's Community Matters)

6. Apprenticed actors project – performance and live stream

7. Anthem for Youth with Spring Mount Youth Group – the track has had 25,000 online listens and is considered to be the unofficial anthem for Barrow. It was performed live at a local festival in the summer and the 300 strong audience all sang it!

8. Anthem for Unity with Furness Multi-Cultural Forum Youth Group

9. Anthem for the High Street in Barrow Market - instant song writing for the public (partnership with Barrow Market)

10. Dog Days walkabout puppetry with Bowie the big Collie, 6 events plus community making and 'dog show' in Barrow Park (Partnership with Love Barrow Families)

11. Allotment Tales – outdoor environmental performance (partnership with ArtGene)

12. Online writing workshops for adults and children

13. Cliff - Short film made with newly qualified young artists from Barrow to build their cv's and professional practice

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2022 (continued)

The beneficiaries were:

- Children and young people between the ages of 7-25 living in Barrow-in-Furness, particularly those at most risk from poverty (residents of Smeaton Street, Hindpool, Ormsgill and Longways Estates)
- Families of the children and young people particularly those at most risk from poverty in the above communities
- LGBTQ+ young people in the Borough
- Young people and vulnerable adults struggling with their mental health and well-being
- Young people with additional needs (Autistic Spectrum conditions)
- Young people of diverse ethnicity
- Young emerging artists from Barrow

Here are some comments from participants and partners:

‘To be honest my day was going crap, then you turned up and now it’s fantastic.’

Resident of Longways Estate

‘It was brilliant, it helped my imagination to run riot. During lock-down it had got fenced in. I now go around looking at things and see them in a different way – not just as possible puppets but as other things as well. I really liked the group because although suggestions were made on how you might want to do things, nothing was wrong. All ideas were viewed as worthy efforts and everyone appreciated other’s ideas. There was a great deal of respect between tutors and participants. I don’t think anything could have been better.’

Participant in puppet workshop, Women’s Community Matters

‘After an incredible week of songs from the super talented Songsmiths, saying thank you just doesn’t seem enough. You brought the market back to life and made lots of people smile.’

Manager, Barrow Market.

Case Study

Vinny is 5 years old and lives on the Longways Estate. His grandma brought him to Smeaton Street, Central Ward to see our 4-metre-long collie dog puppet, Bowie. We commissioned Bowie in 2020-21 and deployed in him in community engagement in 2021-22.

Vinny is autistic. He does not speak very much and never to people he doesn’t know. The family struggle to get him to engage and also to get him to eat. Vinny was drawn to the big dog and also to some small ‘terriers’, made by our Project Manager from plastic bottles. Vinny decided he wanted to make his own Bottle Terrier and so his grandma told him he could make his own after lunch. Vinny not only ate all his lunch with gusto but made his own dog and brought it to meet us later that day when we brought Bowie to Longways Estate. Vinny is evidence of the sudden positive change that creative engagement can bring.

‘My grandson is Autistic; he never talks to anyone. Just look at him with your people and that dog! I can’t believe it!’

Vinny’s Grandma, a Resident of Longways Estate

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2022 (continued)

Fundraising

We continued our strategy of applying for multi-year funding, with a successful 2-year application to the Garfield Weston Foundation, and a grant of Continuation Funding from The National Lottery Community Fund. We have begun writing our application for Arts Council National Portfolio funding which if successful will run to 2026, and have plans to apply for multi-year funding to run alongside this.

Succession

We have begun forward planning for the retirement of our Administrator in 2023, and the eventual retirement of the Artistic Director in 2025. We are in the early stages of this, and are looking at different models of how the Company can develop and strengthen with the move forward from our current founder model.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2022 (continued)

How do we view the artistic quality of the work produced and how was this assessed?

1. Innovation

We recognise the need to continually bring new ideas and influences to our work. This year we have brought in a number of new artists to work with both participants and creative team and we continue to value the work of artists who have worked with the company for a number of years.

2. Audience Audit

Throughout the year we have performed a Quality Audit with our public audiences.

Management ability

Our board continue to give the company good positive support.

What was the public benefit?

Our audiences and participation figures have held steady for the last 5 years.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2022 (continued)

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

The future strategy is to continue to build up free reserves through planned operating surpluses. However the Board is aware that it is unlikely that the target range can be reached for at least two or three years. For the short term the Board has also had to consider the extent to which existing activities and expenditure might have to cut back in order to operate within a smaller amount of available funds.

RISK REVIEW

The Board has in place a risk management strategy, which comprises:

- an annual review of the risks the Charity may face;
- the establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate the risks identified in the plan; and
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the Charity should any of those risks materialise

The Board Members are particularly aware of the need to broaden the Charity's funding base with a mixture of service contracts and project grants. With this in mind, the Board Members have put in place a strategy that assesses the targets for earning income from workshops and performances in the light of uncertainties surrounding the availability of service contracts and the likelihood of securing project grants. This strategy is informed by the need for the Charity to fulfil its financial obligations to staff and contractors. The reserves policy applies and will be followed as necessary (see previous page).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Company law requires the Board Members to prepare financial statements that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity at the end of the financial year and of the surplus or deficit for the financial year.

In doing so the Board Members are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable 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 appropriate to presume that the Company is unable to continue its activities

The Board Members are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2022 (continued)

Acknowledgements

The Charity is grateful for the continued support of its funders in the period under review:

- Arts Council England (North West)
- Cumbria County Council
- National Lottery Community Fund
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Sir John Fisher Foundation

This report was approved by the Board on:

Date: - 21 SEPTEMBER 2022

and signed on its behalf by: - COLIN ALDRED

Colin Aldred

Signature of the
Chair of the Board

28/11/2022

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY (Including Income and Expenditure Account)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2022

Page 11

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds 2021-2022 £	Restricted Funds 2021-2022 £	Total Funds 2021-2022 £	Total Funds 2020-2021 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
<i>Incoming resources from charitable activities:</i>					
Grants towards arts projects	2	127061	51617	178678	168009
Contribution to equipment		-	-	-	-
Workshops and performances		-	-	-	-
Sundry Income				0	18040
<i>Investment income and interest</i>		42	-	42	45
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		<u>127103</u>	<u>51617</u>	<u>178720</u>	<u>186094</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
<i>Cost of generating funds</i>					
Applying for funding and compliance costs	3	<u>2718</u>	<u>4076</u>	<u>6794</u>	<u>6009</u>
<i>Charitable activities</i>					
Projects, training and advice	4	131875	47541	179416	146789
<i>Governance costs</i>	4	<u>7199</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7199</u>	<u>6453</u>
<i>Total cost of activities</i>	4	<u>139074</u>	<u>47541</u>	<u>186615</u>	<u>153242</u>
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		<u>141792</u>	<u>51617</u>	<u>193409</u>	<u>159251</u>
Net incoming (outgoings) resources before transfers		-14689	-	-14689	26843
Gross transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS (net income for the year)		<u>-14689</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-14689</u>	<u>26843</u>
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward at April 1 2021		80460	-	80460	53617
TOTAL FUNDS AT 31 MARCH 2022		<u><u>65771</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>65771</u></u>	<u><u>80460</u></u>

The statement of financial activities included all gains and losses in the year.

All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities

The note on pages 13 to 19 form part of these financial statements

**THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE
BALANCE SHEET AS AT MARCH 31 2022**

Page 12

	Notes	£	2022 £	£	2021 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	7		3046		4060
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	9	4342		4342	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>81737</u>		<u>74751</u>	
		86079		79093	
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due in one year	10	<u>23354</u>		<u>2693</u>	
Net current assets			62725		76400
NET ASSETS			<u>65771</u>		<u>80460</u>
FUNDS					
Unrestricted funds	16		65771		80460
Restricted funds			-		-
TOTAL FUNDS			<u>65771</u>		<u>80460</u>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under section 476 (1) of the Companies Act 2006.

For the year ended March 31 2019 the Company was entitled to exemption under section 476(1) of the Companies Act 2006. No members have required the Company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 477(1).

The Directors acknowledge their responsibility for : -

- i) ensuring the Company keeps accounting records which comply with section 386; and
- ii) preparing accounts which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company as at the end of its income and expenditure for the financial year in accordance with section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act relating to the accounts, so far as applicable to the Company.

Approved by the Board of Directors on : -

21 SEPTEMBER 2022

And signed on their behalf by: -

COLIN AUDREY

Ch. Audrey

DIRECTOR

The notes on pages 13 to 19 form part of these financial statements

28/11/2022

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1 **Accounting policies**

The principle accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the requirements of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (the SORP), applicable accounting standards, the FRSSE and the Companies Act 2006.

Income resources

Income resources include grants that represent unrestricted funds for general purposes but also project grants that are restricted in use (see note 2). Income resources are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amounts are quantifiable. Income resources are included gross, (that is, before any deduction of related costs).

Incoming resources are sometime deferred, for example if fees or project grants have been received in advance of future accounting periods or if the donors and grantors impose pre-conditions that have not yet been met.

Incoming resources from workshops and performances are recognised as having been earned in the same period as when the related activities are provided (I.e. on a receivable basis).

Investment income is recognised on a receivable basis.

Any intangible income (e.g. comprising donated services) is included in income at a valuation which is an estimate of the financial cost borne by the donor but only where such a cost is quantifiable and measurable. No income is recognised when there is no financial cost borne by the third party.

Resources expended

All resources expended are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on an accruals basis and are listed under headings that aggregate all the costs related to that activity. Where costs cannot be directly attributed they are allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

The costs of generating funds include those costs incurred in applying for funding and compliance costs.

The costs of charitable activities include resources expended on performances and projects, touring, education and outreach work.

Governance costs include those costs incurred in connection with the management of the Charity.

Rehearsal costs, preparatory costs and production costs are recognised in the year in which they arise. Costs relating to productions not opened yet are carried forward as current assets at the year-end date.

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities as incurred over the term of the lease.

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset to a suitable residual value over its expected useful life, which in the case of an item of equipment is estimated at four years. Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £250 or where otherwise appropriate.

Fund accounting

Funds held by the Charitable company comprise either: -

~ **Unrestricted general funds** - these are funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the Trustees.

~ **Designated funds** - these are funds set aside from time to time by the Trustees out of unrestricted general funds for specific purposes or projects. (There are none currently designated).

~ **Restricted funds** - these are funds that can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular projects and restricted purposes.

Further explanations of the nature and purposes of each fund are included in the notes to the financial statements where necessary.

	Unrestricted Funds 2021-2022 £	Restricted Funds 2021-2022 £	Total Funds 2021-2022 £	Total Funds 2020-2021 £
2 INCOMING RESOURCES				
The Francis C Scott Charitable Trust	-	-	-	14900
ACE Regular funded organisation grant	81975	-	81975	81975
Arts Council Project Funding	-	11625	11625	11625
The Hadfield Trust	-	-	-	-
The National Lottery Community Fund	-	37392	37392	28147
Sir John Fisher Foundation	15000	-	15000	15000
Donations	86	-	86	1200
Women's Community Matters	-	-	-	5162
Cumbria County Council	10000	-	10000	10000
The Garfield Weston Foundation	20000	-	20000	-
Barra Culture	-	600	600	-
High Street Action Zone	-	2000	2000	-
Total incoming resources	<u>127061</u>	<u>51617</u>	<u>178678</u>	<u>168009</u>

3 COST OF GENERATING FUNDS

Gross pay - salaries and wages	2047	3070	5117	4491
Social Security costs	104	156	260	318
Employees pension	54	80	134	117
Rent	288	432	720	588
Charity business rates and water rates	47	70	117	92
Light and heat	32	48	80	27
Insurances	56	84	140	133
Repairs and maintenance	29	44	73	91
Telephone and communications	11	16	27	24
Printing, stationery and postage	19	29	48	20
Office expenses	11	17	28	40
Bank charges	0	0	0	0
Depreciation	20	30	50	68
Total Cost of Generating Funds	<u>2718</u>	<u>4076</u>	<u>6794</u>	<u>5773</u>

4 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	DIRECT COSTS <i>ALLOCATED TO ACTIVITIES</i> £	SUPPORT COSTS <i>ALLOCATED TO ACTIVITIES</i> £	GOVERNANCE COSTS £	Total 2021-2022 £	Total 2020-2021 £
Gross pay - salaries and wages	82631	9721	4861	97213	85331
Social Security costs	4191	493	247	4931	6034
Employees Pension	2165	255	127	2547	2221
Fees payable	42089.18	-	-	42089.18	31033
Production costs	5783.28	-	-	5783.28	4394
Accommodation on tour	2490	-	-	2490	494
Travel and subsistence	3360.3	-	-	3360.3	87
Publicity	3090.97	-	-	3090.97	2367
Rent	11616	1367	683	13666	11180
Charity business rates and water	1886	222	111	2219	1738
Light and heat	1298	153	76	1527	503
Insurances	2267	267	133	2667	2534
Repairs and maintenance	1175	138	69	1382	1728
Telephone and communications	427	50	25	502	452
Printing, stationery and postage	775	91	46	912	366
Office expenses	446	52	26	524	747
Bank charges				0	0
Depreciation	819	96	48	963	1286
Annual Report	-	-	747	747	747
Filing fees	-	-	-	-	-
Legal fees	-	-	-	-	-
Totals to Statement of Activities	<u>166510</u>	<u>12905</u>	<u>7199</u>	<u>186615</u>	<u>139095</u>

5 NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

Net movement in funds is stated after charging: -

	2021-2022 £	2020-2021 £
Reporting accountants' remuneration: -		
Annual report and book-keeping fees	747	747
Incorporation and advice	-	-
Depreciation of fixed assets	1014	1354
Operating lease rentals	14385	10460
Number of Trustees reimbursed	-	-
Directors' remuneration and trustees' expenses	-	-

6 STAFF COSTS AND NUMBERS	2021-2022	2020-2021
	£	£
Gross salaries	102329	89822
Social security costs	5190	6351
	<u>107519</u>	<u>96173</u>

The average weekly number of staff including secondees during the period calculated on the basis of full-time equivalents was:-

	No.	No.
Direct charitable and support	1.8	1.8
Fundraising and publicity	0.1	0.1
Management and administration	0.1	0.1
	<u>2.0</u>	<u>2.0</u>

No employee or secondee received emoluments of more than £60000.

7 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS	Project and office equipment	March 2022 Total
	£	£
Cost: -		
As at April 1 2021	29474	29474
Additions	-	0
Disposals	-	-
As at March 31 2022	<u>29474</u>	<u>29474</u>
Depreciation: -		
As at April 1 2021	25414	25414
Charge for the year	1014	1014
Disposals	-	-
As at March 31 2022	<u>26428</u>	<u>26428</u>
Net Book Value: -		
As at March 31 2022	<u>3046</u>	<u>3046</u>
<i>Net Book Value: -</i>		
<i>As at March 31 2021</i>	<u>4059</u>	<u>4059</u>
	Furniture and office equipment	Furniture and office equipment
The net book value at March 2021 represents assets for:	£	£
Shared activities	<u>3046</u>	<u>3046</u>

8 CAPITAL COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

There were no capital commitments at the balance sheet date nor any contingent liabilities

	March 2022 Total £	March 2021 Total £
9 DEBTORS		
Grants and fees receivable	4342	4342
Prepayments and accrued box office income	-	
Total Debtors	<u>4342</u>	<u>4342</u>

	£	£
10 CREDITORS		
Amounts falling due within one year: -		
Creditors	0	0
Social security and other taxes	2356	1695
Accruals	998	998
Deferred Income	20000	0
Total Creditors	<u>23354</u>	<u>2693</u>

11 CONSTITUTION

The Company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. In the event of the Company being wound up the members are committed to contributing £1 each.

12 TRANSACTIONS WITH DIRECTORS

There are no transaction with Directors which require to be disclosed under the FRSSE.

13 TAXATION

The Company is a registered charity and is entitled to claim annual exemption from UK corporation tax.

14 OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

At the balance sheet date the Company had the following annual commitments on leases expiring: -

	2022 Land £	2022 Other £	2021 Land £	2021 Other £
Within two and five years	-	-	-	-
Beyond five years	<u>14385</u>	-	<u>10460</u>	-

15 STATEMENT OF FUNDS

	Balance Apr-21 £	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Transfers between Funds £	Balance Mar-22 £
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	80460	127103	(141792)	-	65771
	<u>80460</u>	<u>127103</u>	<u>(141792)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>65771</u>
Restricted funds					
Project grants and project costs	-	51617	(51617)	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>51617</u>	<u>(51617)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>80460</u>	<u>178720</u>	<u>(159251)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>65771</u>

16 Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at March 31 2021 are represented by	Restricted funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	3046	3046
Current assets	-	86079	86079
Current liabilities	-	(23354)	(23354)
	<u>-</u>	<u>65771</u>	<u>65771</u>

**ACCOUNTANT'S REPORTS TO THE MEMBERS ON THE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
OF THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2022**

Page 20

We report on the financial statements for the year ended March 31 2022 set out on pages 11 to 12.

Respective responsibilities of Directors and Reporting Accountants

The Company's Board is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and they consider that the company is exempt from an audit. It is our responsibility to carry out procedures designed to enable us to report our opinion.

Basis of opinion

Our work was conducted in accordance with the Statement of Standards for Reporting Accountants and so our procedures consisted of comparing the financial statements with the accounting records kept by the Committee and making such limited enquiries of the officers of the Association as we considered necessary for the purposes of this report. These procedures provide only the assurance expressed in our opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion :

- (a) the financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records kept by the Charity under Section 386 of the Companies Act 2006;
- (b) having regard only to, and on the basis of, the information contained in those accounting records :
 - (I) the financial statements have been drawn up in a manner consistent with the accounting requirements specified in Section 393 of the Act;
 - (ii) the Charity satisfied the conditions for exemption from an audit of the financial statements for the year specified in Section 477(2) of the Act and did not, at any time within that year, fall within any of the categories of companies not entitled to the exemption specified in Section 276(1).

Ad Valorem North
Second Floor, Ramsden House
121 - 123 Duke street
Barrow-in-Furness
Cumbria
LA14 1XA

Date:

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

England & Wales - Charity number 1103877

Accounts

Company Number 04941112

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE

(A company limited by guarantee)

**ANNUAL REPORT
and
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2021

Charity Number: 1103877

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE
(A company limited by guarantee)

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2021

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Notes forming part of the financial statements	13
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Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: The Ashton Group Theatre
Charity Number: 1103877
Company Number: 04941112
Registered Office and operational address: 1st Floor, The Cooke's Studios, 104 Abbey Road
Barrow in Furness, Cumbria, LA14 5WR

Board Members at date of approval of this report:

Colin Vaughan Aldred	Hayley Louise Preston
Doreen Floyd	Jackie Ann Drake
Janice Benson	Dr Hayley Jo Anne Willacy

Company Secretary: Rachel Ashton

Charity Correspondence: Rachel Ashton

Artistic Director: Rachel Ashton

Reporting Accountants: Ad Valorem (Northern) Limited
Second Floor, Ramsden House
121 – 123 Duke Street
Barrow-in-Furness
Cumbria
LA14 1XA

Bankers: Co-Operative Bank
PO Box 250
Delf House
Southway
Skelmersdale
WN8 6WT

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2021

The Board of Directors is pleased to present its Annual Report and unaudited financial statements for the year ended March 31 2021.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

The Ashton Group Theatre is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on October 22 2003 and registered as a charity on May 21 2004. The Charitable Company lay dormant until April 1 2005. It was incorporated with reference to a Memorandum of Association, which established the objects and powers of the Charitable Company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the Charitable Company being wound up the members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

Recruitment and Appointment of Board Members

The Directors of the Company are also the Charity Trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the Company's articles are known as Members of the Board (or Board of Management). Under section 34 of the Articles the Board are deemed to have been appointed for a term of three years. This period may be extended by a further appointment to a second term of again three years. However, following six years of service Board Members must stand down for a period of at least one year. Upon the expiry of this one-year the six-year cycle may begin once more.

The Board seeks to ensure that the needs of the Charitable Company's users and beneficiaries are appropriately reflected through the diversity of people elected as Board Members. The Board tries to provide a broad mix of skills amongst the Board Members as a group. Prospective Board Members are encouraged to attend events and familiarise themselves with the Charitable Company's activities and the context within which it operates.

Objectives and Activities

The Charitable Company's objects and principle activities are to promote, maintain, improve and advance education of the public in the art of drama and the other arts to encourage the development of drama through drama productions and educational workshop programmes.

The main activities in the period under review focused on a mixed programme of performance and participatory projects in drama and theatre writing with regeneration objectives.

The strategies employed to assist the Charitable Company to meet these objectives included the following:

- Providing a range of services which reflect relevant quality standards and address the artistic policy of creating work which entertains its audiences and participants by giving voice to a range of contemporary experiences
- Focusing on the introduction of new ideas and ways of working
- Working towards raising and maintaining audience and participation levels by respecting the needs of these groups
- Working in partnership with Arts Council England North West

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2021 (continued)

The Ashton Group is a production led organisation. We operate a year round programme of weekly projects which are designed to mirror contemporary theatre industry practices. Our weekly sessions develop skills whilst being essentially about creating and producing new work. We work with professional artists to achieve this.

Our programme and our base are both called Theatre Factory.

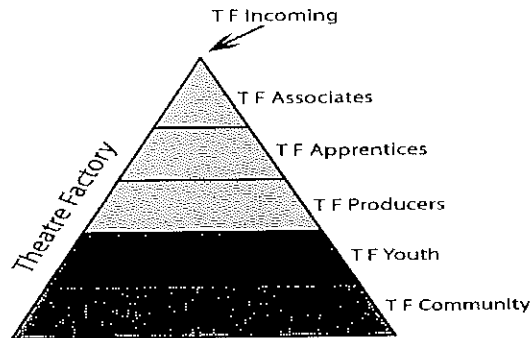
Our core values are:

We put the young people who are our participants at the heart of the creative process.
We produce contemporary theatre that engages with its audience by giving a platform to new and interesting voices from sectors of the community which are often overlooked.
Our work is focussed around a core of projects including 4 age graded Youth Theatres and The Apprenticed Actors Touring Company which gives young people work experience.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2021 (continued)

Our priorities for 2020-21, emerging out of the previous years were:

- Continuing to strengthen and refine our triangular structure



- Strengthening Community links and Partnerships
- Innovation whilst providing continuity across the programme

Our focus for 2020-21 across all projects was:

- economic deprivation
- cultural diversity
- disability
- mental well being
- the environment. This is a new focus for us, which has come about because of the rise in consciousness about environment and climate emergency. It is a priority for aryoung people. We planned a project specifically around this issue for autumn 2020 and a set of upcycling and re-purposing workshops in Spring 2020. In addition, we are working with Designer Kate Unwin towards carbon neutral design.

The Ashton Group works through partnerships in order to deliver to hard to reach and disengaged people. In 2019-20, we managed to work with 280 additional children and young people from Barrow's priority wards. We did it through partnership working with Women's Community Matters, Dropzone and Ramsden Infants, Barrow Market, the Dock Museum, Barrow Library.

In 2020-21 COVID closed those routes to us as 3rd sector organisations, facilities and schools were unable to open to visiting organisations. In 2020-21 therefore we had to work in a different way and despite the pandemic the Company managed to continue to engage with participants both online and face to face.

This is what we achieved:

1st Lockdown – March to July 2020

We cancelled all our face-to-face projects and our staff worked from home. We set up our own initiatives to keep in contact with vulnerable young people, particularly those struggling with their mental health who were already on our databases and adapted other activities so they could be delivered digitally. These are the activities we provided.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2021 (continued)

TF Community

We provided online challenges covering Creative Writing and Art on a new dedicated 'challenge' website. The product of these have been edited and put online. This went out very widely on community Facebook pages such as Barra Culture, Ulverston Self-Isolation Group and our own Facebook pages. The challenges were widely shared

Webinars in making and craft to support Furness LGBTQ who are a particularly isolated group.

TF Youth

We provided 7 Zoom workshops and webinars per week in Drama, Music, Lighting Tech, Writing and Art. We have evidence that this helped to uphold the mental health of our participants

Here is testimony from one of our participants, Michael, that illustrates this:

Good Afternoon Rachel, I'd just thought of sending you a message today, as first to be absolutely honest and say that at the moment I am struggling a little bit with my wellbeing. Over the past week or so, I have been doing my utmost to distract myself by writing my poetry and keeping busy, but with the unique set of circumstances that we are under with Covid, I am finding the restrictiveness and the sense of cabin fever, not to mention the loneliness a little overwhelming at present. As mentioned to Phill and Karen last night via private message I cannot thank enough all concerned with the zoom meetings for helping reduce my unease in these times as I really look forward to each meeting raising throughout the length of the workshops a constant smile, knowing that it is a real sense of caring contact with others, who share the same interests as I do.

TF Apprentices and TF Associates

We would have been touring a piece of theatre with our Apprentices in July 2020. This was cancelled due to Covid, and instead the Creative Team worked out how to produce on Zoom. We sent the cast costumes, a green screen, tripods, lights and extra phone storage. We rehearsed throughout May and June online during the week and then the team of 12 came together at weekends to record. The project included two Associates (Writing and Direction) and supported our Freelancers, some of whom had lost all their other work. The piece was screened in the Autumn and gained around 1200 views in total. This was a digital production of *After Rain* which would have been our touring show.

Organisational Development

In addition to direct delivery of our services in this first period we put infrastructural changes in place with the support of our Board and carried out the following activity:

- overhauled the Company's succession policies and Staffing Structure
- risk assessed sudden loss of key personnel
- changed the Business Plan to include online delivery and liaised closely with Funders to do this
- kept in touch with all our Professional partners in the 3rd Sector and Arts Industry
- put in place planning to re-open our studios in autumn so we could socially-distance our face-to-face work. This included hiring cleaners, buying PPE and a hazer.
- worked closely with the tenants of the Cooke's to implement a staged re-opening
- provided CPD for staff around digital delivery
- Re-wrote our Safeguarding Policies to include digital activity

Post Lockdown – August to December 2020

As lockdown eased, we worked through late July and early August to make our base at Theatre Factory Covid compliant and in August we went back to socially distanced delivery as follows:

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2021 (continued)

TF Community

- LOVE BARROW TOGETHER BARROW RESILIENCE FORUM requested that we deliver some creative activities for their clients during August which we duly did because our building was ready. Numbers were small but it was a start and we learnt about how to run socially distanced activity. We ran sessions in Shadow Theatre, a gentle activity which we could successfully socially distance. We learned a lot from this experience and Barrow Resilience Forum have asked us to work with them again in the spring.
- BARROW RISES LABS. In Autumn half term we delivered 9 short workshops in Sound, Craft and Story Making. We were able to offer 6 bubbles. The project was well attended including some Syrian children who participated via the Multi-Cultural Forum
- SUPPORT FOR ADULTS. Recognising that adults need creative activities as well, we established a Wednesday lunchtime Writing Group for adults on Zoom and a face to face socially distanced Performance Workshop on Wednesday evenings for adults to learn acting and improvisation skills.
- SNOWFLAKES – To keep in contact with children in the priority wards we sent packs of ‘snowflake’ making paper to Ramsden Infants and Greengate Juniors. The resulting 98 snowflakes were made into a ‘snowscape’ in the Cooke’s Studio’s front window for children who had participated to come and visit their snowflake.



- Collaboration with BoomDang, who normally work in Children’s Homes. COVID locked them out of those buildings so we offered them space to deliver their services in our space and involved young people with additional needs in their Drumming Workshops

TF Youth

In September, taking our lead from schools and because organised educational activity was allowed, we reopened our Tuesday and Thursday night Youth Theatre sessions and ran them right up until Christmas. Instead of doing a show for Christmas as we have in previous years the team created an Advent Calendar of 1-minute videos which can be seen on our Facebook page. They were widely shared and we now have followers as far away as Doncaster! The young people’s creative, humorous and often very moving thoughts and ideas seem to have brought light in the darkness to many.

<https://www.facebook.com/2177835615589231/videos/145712353656231>

‘DOG DAYS’. After careful thought, reading widely and consultation with Staff, Partners and Participants we decided that for the foreseeable future we need to change from indoor theatre production to outdoor theatre making. ‘Dog Days’ is our first attempt and the planning with our young people and staff began in the Autumn. It will be pop-up, loosely structured performance by our Youth Theatre for dog walkers along popular dog walking routes involving puppetry and street style performance

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2021 (continued)

TF Producers

Following discussions with Art-Gene we started planning to make a piece of outdoor theatre for their community growing space, Allotment Soup in late summer 2021. The 4 current TF Producers made reconnaissance visits to Allotment Soup with Writer Geoff Cox to meet Art-Gene's staff and participants and to begin the planning of the show, *Allotment Tales*, which will involve our Youth Theatre but be led by the Producers. These are older young people in their early 20's, who are ready to take on production responsibilities under our mentorship. 2 of the 4 participants have Autistic spectrum conditions. We engaged with members of the growing community about the proposed performances to get their view and begin a relationship with them

TF Associates

We commissioned Molly Mather, a young woman from Barrow with a Diploma in Photography from Kendal College to take pictures of our activities. Here are some images she took of the Barrow Rises Labs



2nd Lockdown – January to March 2021

Unlike the first lockdown we now have a new way of working. The changes are embedded and staff are comfortable with new digital and outdoor delivery methods

TF Community

- LABS. After Christmas we re-established 3 online Labs for young people per week in Sound, Shadow Puppetry and Writing
- 4 BARROW RESILIENCE FORUM workshops are planned for the end of the financial year once consultation has taken place as to content.
- ADULT WRITERS are online with a varied programme of guest Professional Writers leading the weekly writing sessions. We provide telephone workshops for 1 participant who, because of her mental health condition, is not able to use the internet
- ADULT PERFORMERS are also online now developing their script with the Artistic Director through weekly discussion and online improvisation sessions.
- ANTHEMS FOR BARROW. We received extra funding from Arts Council England specifically to support freelancers, so we have been able to commission a group of 6 Barrovian Musicians to write songs with members of the community including young people from Spring Mount Centre, Walney.
- DOG DAYS. The pop-up performances are planned for late March. Because of the extra Arts Council finance, we are able to support 4 more Freelance Visual Artists to create puppets and dog walkers' illustrated maps made in consultation with people outdoors taking exercise with their pets.
- KNITTERS. As part of the development of *Dog Days*, 12 older ladies from the Furness area have been engaged as volunteers to knit socks for Youth Theatre. This is because our young people will be wearing wellingtons for outdoor performance, provided through our costume budgets, but not all will have thick socks. This provides a way of including people who do not necessarily engage in the Arts, nor do they have much contact with young people. We intend this to help combat isolation and help people to feel connected.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2021 (continued)

TF Youth

Online again. Tuesday and Thursday groups are back online and preparing improvisations to include in *Dog Days* and ideas to contribute to *Allotment Tales*

TF Associates

KICK DOWN THE DOOR. We ran a seminar in February to support newly qualified young artists. Not only did last year's 3rd year degree students have to graduate from home or online, they now face a very hostile environment in the Performing Arts industry. This CPD series is to support their business development skills and was done in partnership with Geoff Cox, Educator, Creative Thinker and Change Management Consultant.

Who benefitted from the project?

The list below outlines which groups benefitted and the text in brackets shows which projects they used.

Young people at risk of mental ill health (Youth Theatre, Labs and LGBTQ Group)

Young people with autistic spectrum conditions and additional needs (Youth Theatre, Labs, BoomDang collaboration, Producers)

Young People and their Families from priority wards (Youth Theatre, Labs, Snowflakes, Barrow Resilience Forum Workshops)

Isolated adults (Adult Writers, Adult Performers and Knitters) Refugee young people (Labs)

Young emerging artists (Kick Down the Door, Barrow Resilience Forum workshops, Labs)

Freelance Artists from Barrow (Labs, Anthems, Apprentices After Rain project)

General public – (Apprentices - After Rain digital stream)

15% of our participants are neuro-diverse, rising to 48% in Youth Theatre and Producers.

53% of our participants are from the Priority Wards

92% White British, 8% none WB or other white heritage

4% have a physical disability.

How do we view the artistic quality of the work produced and how was this assessed?

1. Innovation

We recognise the need to continually bring new ideas and influences to our work. This year we have brought in a number of new artists to work with both participants and creative team and we continue to value the work of artists who have worked with the company for a number of years.

2. Audience Audit

Throughout the year we have performed a Quality Audit with our public audiences.

Management ability

Our board continue to give the company good positive support.

What was the public benefit?

Our audiences and participation figures have held steady for the last 5 years.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2021 (continued)

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

The future strategy is to continue to build up free reserves through planned operating surpluses. However the Board is aware that it is unlikely that the target range can be reached for at least two or three years. For the short term the Board has also had to consider the extent to which existing activities and expenditure might have to cut back in order to operate within a smaller amount of available funds.

RISK REVIEW

The Board has in place a risk management strategy, which comprises:

- an annual review of the risks the Charity may face;
- the establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate the risks identified in the plan; and
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the Charity should any of those risks materialise

The Board Members are particularly aware of the need to broaden the Charity's funding base with a mixture of service contracts and project grants. With this in mind, the Board Members have put in place a strategy that assesses the targets for earning income from workshops and performances in the light of uncertainties surrounding the availability of service contracts and the likelihood of securing project grants. This strategy is informed by the need for the Charity to fulfil its financial obligations to staff and contractors. The reserves policy applies and will be followed as necessary (see previous page).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Company law requires the Board Members to prepare financial statements that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity at the end of the financial year and of the surplus or deficit for the financial year.

In doing so the Board Members are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable 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 appropriate to presume that the Company is unable to continue its activities

The Board Members are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

REPORT OF THE BOARD FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2021 (continued)

Acknowledgements

The Charity is grateful for the continued support of its funders in the period under review:

- Arts Council England (North West)
- Cumbria County Council
- National Lottery Community Fund
- Francis C Scott Trust
- Sir John Fisher Foundation

This report was approved by the Board on:

Date: -

and signed on its behalf by: -

Signature of the
Chair of the Board

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITY (Including Income and Expenditure Account)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2021

Page 11

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds 2020-2021 £	Restricted Funds 2020-2021 £	Total Funds 2020-2021 £	Total Funds 2019-2020 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
<i>Incoming resources from charitable activities:</i>					
Grants towards arts projects	2	139862	28147	168009	167158
Contribution to equipment		-	-	-	-
Workshops and performances		-	-	-	-
Sundry Income		18040		18040	4300
<i>Investment income and interest</i>		45	-	45	350
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		<u>157947</u>	<u>28147</u>	<u>186094</u>	<u>171808</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
<i>Cost of generating funds</i>					
Applying for funding and compliance costs	3	<u>2403</u>	<u>3606</u>	<u>6009</u>	<u>5773</u>
<i>Charitable activities</i>					
Projects, training and advice	4	122248	24541	146789	132864
<i>Governance costs</i>	4	<u>6453</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6453</u>	<u>6231</u>
<i>Total cost of activities</i>	4	<u>128701</u>	<u>24541</u>	<u>153242</u>	<u>139095</u>
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		<u>131104</u>	<u>28147</u>	<u>159251</u>	<u>144868</u>
Net incoming (outgoings) resources before transfers		26843	-	26843	26939
Gross transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS (net income for the year)		<u>26843</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>26843</u>	<u>26939</u>
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward at April 1 2020		53617	-	53617	26678
TOTAL FUNDS AT 31 MARCH 2021		<u>80460</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>80460</u>	<u>53617</u>

The statement of financial activities included all gains and losses in the year.

All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities

The note on pages 13 to 19 form part of these financial statements

**THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE
BALANCE SHEET AS AT MARCH 31 2021**

Page 12

	Notes	£	2021 £	£	2020 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	7		4060		5414
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	9	4342		4342	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>74751</u>		<u>46559</u>	
		79093		50901	
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due in one year	10	<u>2693</u>		<u>2698</u>	
Net current assets			76400		48203
NET ASSETS			<u>80460</u>		<u>53617</u>
FUNDS					
Unrestricted funds	16		80460		53617
Restricted funds			-		-
TOTAL FUNDS			<u>80460</u>		<u>53617</u>

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under section 476 (1) of the Companies Act 2006.

For the year ended March 31 2019 the Company was entitled to exemption under section 476(1) of the Companies Act 2006. No members have required the Company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 477(1).

The Directors acknowledge their responsibility for : -

- i) ensuring the Company keeps accounting records which comply with section 386; and
- ii) preparing accounts which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Company as at the end of its income and expenditure for the financial year in accordance with section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act relating to the accounts, so far as applicable to the Company.

Approved by the Board of Directors on : -

And signed on their behalf by: -

DIRECTOR

The notes on pages 13 to 19 form part of these financial statements

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

i Accounting policies

The principle accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the requirements of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (the SORP), applicable accounting standards, the FRSE and the Companies Act 2006.

Income resources

Income resources include grants that represent unrestricted funds for general purposes but also project grants that are restricted in use (see note 2). Income resources are recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amounts are quantifiable. Income resources are included gross, (that is, before any deduction of related costs).

Incoming resources are sometime deferred, for example if fees or project grants have been received in advance of future accounting periods or if the donors and grantors impose pre-conditions that have not yet been met.

Incoming resources from workshops and performances are recognised as having been earned in the same period as when the related activities are provided (I.e. on a receivable basis).

Investment income is recognised on a receivable basis.

Any intangible income (e.g. comprising donated services) is included in income at a valuation which is an estimate of the financial cost borne by the donor but only where such a cost is quantifiable and measurable. No income is recognised when there is no financial cost borne by the third party.

Resources expended

All resources expended are included in the Statement of Financial Activities on an accruals basis and are listed under headings that aggregate all the costs related to that activity. Where costs cannot be directly attributed they are allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

The costs of generating funds include those costs incurred in applying for funding and compliance costs.

The costs of charitable activities include resources expended on performances and projects, touring, education and outreach work.

Governance costs include those costs incurred in connection with the management of the Charity.

Rehearsal costs, preparatory costs and production costs are recognised in the year in which they arise. Costs relating to productions not opened yet are carried forward as current assets at the year-end date.

NOTES FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities as incurred over the term of the lease.

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset to a suitable residual value over its expected useful life, which in the case of an item of equipment is estimated at four years. Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £250 or where otherwise appropriate.

Fund accounting

Funds held by the Charitable company comprise either: -

~ **Unrestricted general funds** - these are funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the Trustees.

~ **Designated funds** - these are funds set aside from time to time by the Trustees out of unrestricted general funds for specific purposes or projects. (There are none currently designated).

~ **Restricted funds** - these are funds that can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular projects and restricted purposes.

Further explanations of the nature and purposes of each fund are included in the notes to the financial statements where necessary.

2 INCOMING RESOURCES	Unrestricted Funds 2020-2021 £	Restricted Funds 2020-2021 £	Total Funds 2020-2021 £	Total Funds 2019-2020 £
The Francis C Scott Charitable Trust	14900	-	14900	14600
ACE Regular funded organisation grant	81975	-	81975	80494
Arts Council Project Funding	11625	-	11625	0
The Hadfield Trust	-	-	-	2000
The National Lottery Community Fund	-	28147	28147	27327
Sir John Fisher Foundation	15000	-	15000	15000
Donations	1200	-	1200	461
Women's Community Matters	5162	-	5162	0
Cumbria County Council	10000	-	10000	10000
The Garfield Weston Foundation	-	-	-	10000
The Percy Bilton Charity	-	-	-	6526
Barrow Savoyards	-	-	-	750
Total incoming resources	<u>139862</u>	<u>28147</u>	<u>168009</u>	<u>167158</u>

3 COST OF GENERATING FUNDS

Gross pay - salaries and wages	1796	2695	4491	4277
Social Security costs	127	191	318	287
Employees pension	47	70	117	129
Rent	235	353	588	523
Charity business rates and water rates	37	55	92	90
Light and heat	11	16	27	14
Insurances	53	80	133	121
Repairs and maintenance	36	55	91	160
Telephone and communications	10	14	24	32
Printing, stationery and postage	8	12	20	19
Office expenses	16	24	40	29
Bank charges	0	0	0	2
Depreciation	27	41	68	90
Total Cost of Generating Funds	<u>2403</u>	<u>3606</u>	<u>6009</u>	<u>5773</u>

4 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	DIRECT COSTS <i>ALLOCATED TO ACTIVITIES</i>	SUPPORT COSTS <i>ALLOCATED TO ACTIVITIES</i>	GOVERNANCE COSTS	Total 2020-2021	Total 2019-2020
	£	£	£	£	£
Gross pay - salaries and wages	72531	8533	4267	85331	81256
Social Security costs	5129	603	302	6034	5442
Employees Pension	1888	222	111	2221	2448
Fees payable	31033	-	-	31033	20298
Production costs	4394	-	-	4394	1643
Accommodation on tour	494	-	-	494	1032
Travel and subsistence	87	-	-	87	3905
Publicity	2367	-	-	2367	1802
Rent	9503	1118	559	11180	9938
Charity business rates and water	1477	174	87	1738	1704
Light and heat	428	50	25	503	264
Insurances	2154	253	127	2534	2300
Repairs and maintenance	1469	173	86	1728	3053
Telephone and communications	384	45	23	452	596
Printing, stationery and postage	311	37	18	366	358
Office expenses	635	75	37	747	552
Bank charges	0	0	0	0	43
Depreciation	1093	129	64	1286	1713
Annual Report	-	-	747	747	747
Filing fees	-	-	-	-	-
Legal fees	-	-	-	-	-
Totals to Statement of Activities	<u>135377</u>	<u>11412</u>	<u>6453</u>	<u>153243</u>	<u>139095</u>

5 NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

Net movement in funds is stated after charging: -

	2020-2021	2019-2020
	£	£
Reporting accountants' remuneration: -		
Annual report and book-keeping fees	747	747
Incorporation and advice	-	-
Depreciation of fixed assets	1354	172
Operating lease rentals	10460	10460
Number of Trustees reimbursed	-	-
Directors' remuneration and trustees' expenses	-	-

6 STAFF COSTS AND NUMBERS	2020-2021	2019-2020
	£	£
Gross salaries	89822	85532
Social security costs	6351	5729
	<u>96173</u>	<u>91261</u>

The average weekly number of staff including secondees during the period calculated on the basis of full-time equivalents was:-

	No.	No.
Direct charitable and support	1.8	1.8
Fundraising and publicity	0.1	0.1
Management and administration	0.1	0.1
	<u>2.0</u>	<u>2.0</u>

No employee or secondee received emoluments of more than £60000.

7 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Project and office equipment	March 2021 Total
	£	£
Cost: -		
As at April 1 2020	29474	29474
Additions	-	0
Disposals	-	-
As at March 31 2021	<u>29474</u>	<u>29474</u>
Depreciation: -		
As at April 1 2020	24060	24060
Charge for the year	1354	1354
Disposals	-	-
As at March 31 2021	<u>25414</u>	<u>25414</u>
Net Book Value: -		
As at March 31 2021	<u>4060</u>	<u>4060</u>
<i>Net Book Value: -</i>		
<i>As at March 31 2020</i>	<u>5413</u>	<u>5413</u>
	Furniture and office equipment	Furniture and office equipment
The net book value at March 2021 represents assets for:	£	£
Shared activities	<u>4060</u>	<u>4060</u>

8 CAPITAL COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

There were no capital commitments at the balance sheet date nor any contingent liabilities

	March 2021 Total £	March 2020 Total £
9 DEBTORS		
Grants and fees receivable	4342	4342
Prepayments and accrued box office income	-	
Total Debtors	<u>4342</u>	<u>4342</u>

10 CREDITORS

Amounts falling due within one year: -

	£	£
Creditors	0	0
Social security and other taxes	1695	1700
Accruals	998	998
Total Creditors	<u>2693</u>	<u>2698</u>

11 CONSTITUTION

The Company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. In the event of the Company being wound up the members are committed to contributing £1 each.

12 TRANSACTIONS WITH DIRECTORS

There are no transaction with Directors which require to be disclosed under the FRSSE.

13 TAXATION

The Company is a registered charity and is entitled to claim annual exemption from UK corporation tax.

14 OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

At the balance sheet date the Company had the following annual commitments on leases expiring: -

	2021 Land £	2021 Other £	2020 Land £	2020 Other £
Within two and five years	-	-	-	-
Beyond five years	<u>10460</u>	-	<u>10460</u>	-

THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2021

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15 STATEMENT OF FUNDS	Balance Apr-20 £	Incoming Resources £	Outgoing Resources £	Transfers between Funds £	Balance Mar-21 £
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	53617	157947	(131104)	-	80460
	<u>53617</u>	<u>157947</u>	<u>(131104)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>80460</u>
Restricted funds					
Project grants and project costs	-	28147	(28147)	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>28147</u>	<u>(28147)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>53617</u>	<u>186094</u>	<u>(159251)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>80460</u>

16 Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at March 31 2020 are represented by	Restricted funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	4060	4060
Current assets	-	79093	79093
Current liabilities	-	(2698)	(2698)
	<u>-</u>	<u>80455</u>	<u>80455</u>

**ACCOUNTANT'S REPORTS TO THE MEMBERS ON THE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
OF THE ASHTON GROUP THEATRE FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 2020**

Page 20

We report on the financial statements for the year ended March 31 2020 set out on pages 11 to 12.

Respective responsibilities of Directors and Reporting Accountants

The Company's Board is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and they consider that the company is exempt from an audit. It is our responsibility to carry out procedures designed to enable us to report our opinion.

Basis of opinion

Our work was conducted in accordance with the Statement of Standards for Reporting Accountants and so our procedures consisted of comparing the financial statements with the accounting records kept by the Committee and making such limited enquiries of the officers of the Association as we considered necessary for the purposes of this report. These procedures provide only the assurance expressed in our opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion :

- (a) the financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records kept by the Charity under Section 386 of the Companies Act 2006;
- (b) having regard only to, and on the basis of, the information contained in those accounting records :
 - (I) the financial statements have been drawn up in a manner consistent with the accounting requirements specified in Section 393 of the Act;
 - (ii) the Charity satisfied the conditions for exemption from an audit of the financial statements for the year specified in Section 477(2) of the Act and did not, at any time within that year, fall within any of the categories of companies not entitled to the exemption specified in Section 276(1).

Ad Valorem (Northern)
Second Floor, Ramsden House
121 - 123 Duke street
Barrow-in-Furness
Cumbria
LA14 1XA

Date: