

Dende Collective
(A Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee)

**Annual Report, Receipts and Payments Accounts, Statement of Assets and Liabilities,
and Independent Examiner's Report**

For the Year Ended 31 March 2024

Charity Information

Charity Name: Dende Collective

Charity Number: 1107850

Company Number: 05250986

Registered Address: 12 Buckley Road, London, NW6 7NA

Contact Information:

- Website: www.dendecollective.org
- Email: andre@dendecollective.org
- Phone: 07984 451 796

Independent Examiner: Kanti & Co. Ltd

- Address: 27 Kingston Road, South Wimbledon, London, SW19 1JX

Bank: The Co-Operative Bank

- Address: P.O. Box 250, Delf House, Southway, Skelmersdale, WN8 6WT

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Introduction

Dendê Collective, established in 1999 and registered as a charity in 2005, is a creative arts organization dedicated to advancing education and fostering community connections. As a Company Limited by Guarantee, registered in England (No. 05250986), Dendê Collective is governed by its trustees, who also serve as directors of the company.

Over the years, Dendê Collective has become a vital force in creating transformative theatre, educational programs, and community-driven projects with an international perspective. Our work bridges generational and cultural divides, fostering creativity, connection, and inclusion among diverse participants.

In 2023–2024, Dendê Collective continued to thrive, enriching lives and leaving a lasting impact on those who engaged with our work. The **Drama for Elders** program, a cornerstone of our offerings since 2008, flourished this year, alongside innovative initiatives such as **Gardens R Us** and **The Church Street Mask Project**. These projects embody our ethos of accessibility, empowerment, and joy.

Through weekly tailored communication—including one-to-one phone calls, WhatsApp updates, and emails—we ensured that every participant, particularly those aged 60 and above, felt connected and valued. Together, we fostered moments of pride, belonging, and community resilience.

We are deeply grateful to **Westminster City Council (WCC)**, **Church Street and Mayfair Libraries**, **Hammersmith Community Gardens Association (HCGA)**, the **Penfold Community Hub**, and all our funders and collaborators. Their unwavering support enables us to sustain this vital work and nurture a creative, connected community.

Trustees' Report

This year has been one of extraordinary achievements and meaningful connections. Dendê Collective has deepened its impact within the community, reaching participants of all ages and backgrounds while maintaining a particular focus on our elder communities.

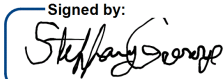
Our **Drama for Elders** program flourished, running voluntarily at Church Street Library from May to October before transitioning to funded sessions at Mayfair Library in November and Church Street Library in January 2024. By March, additional funding was secured to sustain these programs through June 2025, demonstrating our ability to develop sustainable programming for older residents engaged with Dendê Collective since 2008.

The Church Street Mask Project showcased the vibrancy of intergenerational collaboration. Bringing together participants aged 18+ and 60+, the project culminated in a stunning walkabout performance that engaged over 750 spectators. The initiative exemplified our commitment to fostering creativity and community pride. This project was awarded funding from **WCC Inside Out Festival Fund**.

Gardens R Us, a new collaboration with HCGA, integrated arts & crafts, drama, and film inspired by the natural world. Participants reported significant improvements in confidence, creativity, and social connections, laying the groundwork for its continuation as **Fruits R Us**, the second instalment of this three-year initiative in 2025. This project was awarded funds from **WCC Healthy Communities Fund**.

The trustees confirm that, in carrying out the activities described in this report, they have had due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance, as required under Section 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011.

Looking ahead, we aim to expand our elder-led performances, establish our annual pantomime as a community tradition, and deepen our intergenerational initiatives. Thank you to our participants, partners, funders, and team. Together, we are proving that creativity and community are powerful forces for change.

Signed by: 
Signed: Steffany George
Trustee (on behalf of the Board) 29/01/2025

Public Benefit Statement

Dendê Collective's work is guided by its charitable objectives, which are to advance education for the public benefit by promoting the arts, particularly but not exclusively the art of drama.

In meeting these objectives, the trustees confirm that they have complied with their duty under Section 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance issued by the Charity Commission.

Our activities, which include community projects, arts workshops, performances, and educational programs, are designed to provide the following public benefits:

- Encouraging lifelong learning by teaching new skills in the arts.
- Reducing isolation and enhancing social connections for older adults and other vulnerable groups.
- Promoting inclusion, diversity, and creativity within communities, with a primary focus on London.

All Dendê Collective programs are accessible to participants regardless of background, and we strive to provide inclusive opportunities that foster connection and growth.

Transforming Lives: The Impact of Our Work on Elders

For over 7 years, Dendê Collective has consistently delivered high-quality programming that enhances the lives of elders by fostering confidence, creativity, and meaningful community connections.

Core Program Components:

- **Imparting New Skills:** Teaching improvisation techniques, mask performance, and devising approaches to support lifelong learning.
 - **Generating Fun:** One of the key tools in fighting the adversities of ageing in a big city like London.
 - **Generating Memories:** Activities spark joy and create moments participants cherish.
 - **Holistic Engagement:** Sessions empower participants through creativity, physical expression, and meaningful connections.
 - **Tailored Communication:** Weekly one-to-one calls, emails, and WhatsApp updates ensure full participation, breaking down barriers.
 - **Building Communities:** Consistent and regular programs in the same areas of Westminster over the years have fostered a group of participants who connect during sessions and beyond, share their contact details, and support one another.
-

Project Highlights

1. Drama for Elders

Since 2008, this program has been a safe, creative, and empowering space for participants aged 60+.

2023–2024 Achievements:

- Delivered voluntary sessions at Church Street Library (May–October 2023) to maintain continuity.
- Secured funding for sessions at Mayfair Library (November 2023) and Church Street Library (January 2024), extending support through June 2025.
- Reached over 50 participants, many of whom reported improved confidence, creativity, and social connections.
- Explored themes such as storytelling, improvisation, and Samuel Beckett's works, empowering participants to expand their creative horizons.

Participant Voices:

- "The weekly gatherings gave me something to look forward to and helped me enjoy every moment."
- "Drama helped me rediscover talents I hadn't used in years. It lifted my spirits and gave me confidence."
- "I feel more connected and alive after every session."

2. The Church Street Mask Project 2023 (TCSMP)

This intergenerational initiative ran from August 1 to 31, 2023, as part of WCC Inside Out outdoor arts festival, culminating in a vibrant walkabout performance through Church Street Market.

Key Outcomes:

- Engaged 41 participants (61% Westminster residents), with 38 completing masks and 35 performing.
- Weekly attendance increased steadily, demonstrating strong community engagement.
- The final performance reached an estimated 750–1,000 spectators, fostering community pride and connection.
- Created autobiographical art films and hosted a celebratory screening, fostering participants' sense of identity, pride, and community connection.
- Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with 89.5% rating the project as excellent and 10.5% as very good.
- 100% of participants reported an impact on their creativity, 94.7% highlighted socialization benefits, and 68.4% noted improvements in communication and well-being.
- Established new partnership with Penfold Community Hub which offered space in kind, additional recruitment, marketing and staffing for the performance.

Testimonials:

- "It was so inspiring to get back to creativity again. I loved the mask-making process and the sense of community it created."
- "The parade in Church Street brought so much joy to the community. Seeing smiles from people of all ages was incredibly uplifting."

3. Gardens R Us

Delivered in partnership with HCGA with funding from WCC Healthy Communities Fund, this project combined arts & crafts, drama and film inspired by nature. Running from February to March 2024, it engaged older residents at the Penfold Community Hub.

Key Outcomes:

- 100% of participants reported increased creativity.
- 88% noted reduced loneliness; 75% experienced improved mental health.
- Activities like wearable art creation and character development built new skills and boosted confidence.
- New 3-year partnership with HCGA.
- Strengthening relationship with Penfold Community Hub.

Testimonials:

- "The whole project was a wonderful adventure. It showed me that you're never too old to take on a challenge and learn something new."

Trustees and Governance

Dendê Collective is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee (Registered in England No. 05250986). As a company limited by guarantee, the organization does not have shareholders; instead, members agree to contribute a nominal amount in the event of the company being wound up.

The charity is governed by a board of trustees who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006. They are responsible for ensuring the charity complies with its obligations under both charity law and company law.

The trustees are committed to upholding effective governance and meet regularly to review finances in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006, evaluate the impact of the charity's programs, and plan strategically for the future.

Dendê Collective adheres to the Charity Governance Code and maintains a Conflict of Interest policy to ensure transparency and effective decision-making.

Trustees for 2023–2024:

- Robert Fish (Chair)
- Jonathan Peter Dewey (Trustee)
- Steffany George (Trustee)

This report has been reviewed and approved on behalf of the board by **Steffany George**, acting as the signatory for the trustees.

Partners and Support

This year's achievements were made possible through collaboration and support:

- **Westminster City Council:** Provided funding through the Healthy Communities Fund and Inside Out program.
- **Church Street Library:** Provided space, recruitment support and Marketing free of charge and obtained funding for Drama for Elders sessions.
- **Mayfair Library:** Provided space for free, recruitment, marketing and funding to deliver sessions there expanding the Drama for Elders programme.
- **Penfold Community Hub:** Hosted multiple projects, offering a welcoming and creative space free of charge.
- **HCGA:** Partnered on a three-year initiative, integrating nature-inspired creativity.
- **Participants:** Their enthusiasm and commitment remain at the heart of Dendê Collective's work.

Financial Summary

The financial accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 and follow the applicable accounting framework for charities with income under £250,000, utilizing a receipts-and-payments basis.

All funds received during the year were used in line with their designated purposes. The trustees confirm that restricted funds for forward projects (e.g., The Church Street Masquerade 2024 and Drama for Elders @ Mayfair Library) are held securely and will be applied to the specified activities in the 2024–2025 financial year.

Receipts and Payments Accounts

Category	Restricted (£)	Unrestricted (£)	Total (£)
Income			
Grants and donations	28,700.00	-	28,700.00
Total Income	28,700.00	-	28,700.00
Expenditure			
The Church Street Mask Project	10,932.36	-	10,932.36
Drama for Elders	800.00	-	800.00
Gardens R Us	1,200.00	-	1,200.00
Overheads & operational costs	226.00	342.22	568.22
Accountancy fees	600.00	-	600.00
Other costs (transport, etc.)	-	375.00	375.00
Total Expenditure	13,758.36	861.00	14,619.36
Surplus/Deficit	14,941.64	(861.00)	14,080.64

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Assets	£
Assets	
Cash at bank and in hand	20,075.00
Debtors (if any)	0.00
Other assets (e.g., equipment)	0.00
Total Assets	20,075.00
Liabilities	
Creditors (if any)	600.00
Other liabilities (if any)	0.00
Total Liabilities	600.00
Net Assets	19,475.00
Restricted funds	14,080.64
Unrestricted funds	5394.36
Total Funds	19,475.00

PN: Unrestricted Funds: Opening Balance BFW £5,393 less adjustments (£861)

Financial Notes

1. Restricted Income:

- Most of the income received during the 2023–2024 financial year is restricted and tied to specific projects and activities.
- **Forward-Funded Projects:** Some income received during this period is for projects to be delivered in the 2024–2025 financial year, such as:
 - The Church Street Masquerade 2024 (£10,000).
 - Drama for Elders @ Mayfair Library (May–July 2024, £1,300).
- Restricted funds totalling **£14,941.64** represent allocations for these forward-funded activities and cannot be used for other purposes.

2. Charitable Activities:

- **The Church Street Mask Project 2023** incurred costs of **£10,932.36**, fully covered by its restricted funding.
- **Voluntary Drama for Elders sessions** transitioned to funded programming, demonstrating sustainable growth and strong community engagement.

3. Core Costs and Reserves Policy:

- Dendê Collective operates with minimal core costs and maintains a reserves policy of **£3,000–£5,000 annually**, ensuring financial stability and flexibility in addressing unforeseen challenges.
- The unrestricted funds include an **opening balance of £5,393**, brought forward from the previous financial year, contributing to the charity's reserves.
- Unrestricted funds show an adjustment of **(£861)** during the year, reflecting the allocation of unrestricted expenses such as transport and overhead costs.
- Despite this adjustment, unrestricted funds of **£4,533.36** include contributions to the reserves, supporting operational sustainability and unexpected project needs.

4. Reserves Management:

- The reserves reflect the organization's adherence to its reserves policy, which ensures the maintenance of healthy financial reserves to safeguard operations and provide stability during unforeseen challenges.
- This strong financial position is the result of effective project management and sound financial practices over previous years, enabling Dendê Collective to operate sustainably.

5. Sustainability and Fair Compensation:

- Restricted funding is carefully allocated to specific projects, while reserves are strategically managed to ensure long-term sustainability.
- All team members and artists are paid only during project delivery, with wages exceeding minimum standards and often aligned with **ITC (Independent Theatre Council) rates**, reflecting Dendê Collective's commitment to fairness and professionalism in the arts sector.

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Dendê Collective

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024, which are set out on pages 8 to 9.

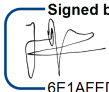
Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011. The trustees consider that the audit requirement of section 144(2) of the Act does not apply, and that an independent examination is needed.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that, in any material respect:

- Accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- The accounts do not accord with those records.

Signed:  Signed by:
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Yadu Aryal
Chartered Certified Accountant, Kanti & Co. Ltd

Looking Ahead

In 2024–2025, Dendê Collective will:

- **Expand elder-led performance opportunities:** With secured funding from City of West Charitable Trust to run three terms of Drama for Elders at Church Street Library (September 2024 to June 2025), we plan to enhance elder-led performances. The Cockpit Theatre has offered concessional hire dates in June and December 2025 through December 2027, providing a professional platform for these shows. We aim to secure additional funding to cover venue hire, artist fees, and rehearsal costs to ensure these performances flourish.
- **Develop intergenerational collaborations:** The Church Street Masquerade Project has secured funding for 2024 through the Westminster City Councils Inside Out program of outdoor activities. We are awaiting funding confirmation for 2025, with the long-term vision of making this project a regular feature in Westminster and expanding into neighbouring boroughs. This initiative brings together diverse age groups to foster creativity and community pride.
- **Deepen community connections:** Following the success of Gardens R Us, the first instalment of a three-year collaboration with HCGA and Penfold Community Hub, we launched Fruits R Us in January 2025. This second instalment explores themes of creativity, well-being, and environmental awareness, further strengthening our partnerships and participant engagement.

Sign-Off

This report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011. The financial accounts have been independently examined to ensure compliance with applicable laws and standards.

This report has been approved on behalf of the Board of Trustees of Dendê Collective, a registered charity (No. 1107850) and a company limited by guarantee (Registered in England No. 05250986).

Signed:  Signed by:
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Steffany George
Trustee (on behalf of the Board)