

OPEN CLASP THEATRE COMPANY

A company limited by guarantee

REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Charity number 1108000

Company number 05137687

OPEN CLASP THEATRE COMPANY

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TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

For the year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees are pleased to present their annual Directors' report together with financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31 March 2024 which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a Directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

These financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, Open Clasp Theatre Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association; and the document 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)'.

Objectives and Activities

Charitable Purpose

The objects of the company, as set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association, are to promote, maintain, improve and advance education in the arts, particularly by encouraging the arts of drama, dance, singing and music, and to offer arts experiences which assist in developing self and social awareness, self-confidence and empowerment, in particular but not exclusively for women (including young women between 12 and 18 years of age) who live in areas of social and economic deprivation, for the purposes of social inclusion, to break down barriers that deny communities access to, and participation in, the "live arts".

Aims and Intended Impact

Within its charitable objects the Trustees' aims are to:

- Raise self-esteem and confidence with women and young women by facilitating effective, thought-provoking and empowering drama workshops, which allow participants to debate and conclude on strategies that ensure that the basic human rights of all women and young women are recognised, valued and demanded
- Create high quality theatre from a female gaze for mixed audiences
- Create truthful, risk-taking theatre which is informed by the lived experiences of the women and young women we work with
- Make space for social debate and to encourage our audiences to walk in the shoes of women, including those who are the most disempowered in our society
- Create performance pieces that are of an excellent standard, and are relevant, accessible, effective and highly entertaining
- Tour theatre to communities who would otherwise feel excluded from participating in the "live arts"
- Allow audiences to develop and gain new skills in, and knowledge and understanding of, the use of theatre to look at issues and concerns relevant to their everyday lives

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- Accompany each tour with drama workshops which allow audience members to consider the issues raised in more depth
- Transform non-arts settings into spaces that ensure access to theatre of a standard of excellence
- Produce accessible and relevant theatre as a tool to explore, challenge, understand, gain knowledge of and bring about effective change on issues that are relevant to women and young women's lived experiences
- Reach new audiences within the region
- Provide a vital link in communication, helping professionals to consult with and listen to local people's views and concerns, e.g. conferences
- Develop new collaborations with exceptional artists that strengthen the company's artistic practice
- Support the development of emerging artists through our projects

Principal Activities

The company's principal activity to further its charitable purposes for the public benefit during the year was to offer arts experiences which assist in developing self and social awareness, self-confidence, and build power, benefiting in particular but not exclusively women.

Beneficiaries and Public Benefit

In its long-term projects Open Clasp works with women and girls across the North East and the wider North of England. The majority of these women are brought together by existing community organisations alongside which the company works to deliver its projects. These groups may have been meeting for many years or may be set up within the organisations especially for an Open Clasp project. If research has suggested that a particular issue is important to the community organisations to which they tour, Open Clasp may seek out or be invited to a group who represent this issue.

When touring, Open Clasp is booked by existing community organisations and some mainstream venues with a community focus. The host organisation decides whether their performance (and workshop) is for an invited audience, restricted to local residents or open to the public. Open Clasp monitors the bookings to ensure performances and workshops are of an appropriate geographical spread.

Open Clasp's short-term and one-off projects have a wide range of beneficiaries. Open Clasp is usually booked by an organisation to work with specific groups of people for a particular reason e.g. working with survivors to present their stories at a domestic violence conference to raise awareness, or with women in a community setting to increase self-esteem and confidence.

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Open Clasp carry out charitable activities for the benefit of the general public and particularly for the benefit of women and girls. Trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in deciding what activities the charity has undertaken.

In 2023 -2024 Open Clasp continued to work collaboratively with women as co-creators to make new work and extend their model of socially engaged theatre-making in innovative and generous ways including through digital methods.

Lasagna

Following the live national sell-out tour in March 2023, Lasagna was made available online throughout April 2024 through our box office function on ticket.co. An accessible pricing structure was in place to widen access. Our charity partner Pause continues to use Lasagna to train their workforce and for the women they work with who have lost children to the care system or are at risk of.

Mycelial. Co-created with sex worker activists.

Mycelial was our first major international production co-created with sex worker activists from Aotearoa/New Zealand, Ireland and the UK. In association with Northern Stage, it was performed on their Stage 2, from 20 – 27 October 2023. An audience of 938 people attended 8 performances. 45% were furthest from the arts. Our cocreators were based in Aotearoa/New Zealand, Ireland North and South, Northeast and Midlands. Post show panels made space for discussions around the decriminalisation of sex work with cocreators, sex-worker advocacy groups and the global leaders of the movement Dame Catherine Healy and Annah Pickering from the Aotearoa New Zealand Sex Workers' Collective.

'You certainly have created a wonderful gift for our movement!' Dame Catherine Healy, Aotearoa New Zealand Sex Workers' Collective.

'Mycelial portrays the distinctiveness of individual experiences in sex work and the subterranean, subcultural and subrosa connectivity among sex workers, trans folx, and black and brown communities, a pulse or ecosystem that is felt and lived but not always apparent, yet ties all struggles for justice together' (Dr. Raven Bowen, CEO, National Ugly Mugs)

"One of the most powerful performances I have ever watched! The piece was raw and real and told the story of the human behind stigma. This was not a story which exploited those who's story it was telling like so many have done before. This was proven by how many sex workers were here feeling confident to tell their story too!" Audience Member

The company attended a march and service to remember all those from the sex industry who have been murdered or affected by violence and to highlight the need for action to end violence and crimes against sex workers. Organised by GAP/MAP in Newcastle.

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence

Workplaces including HMPPS and police forces had access to our digital catalogue of work to raise awareness across their workforces & support their own #16 days of activity. We

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presented a Rattle Snake screening and post-show discussion to staff and students at Northumbria University as part of their Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion programme.

Us Too: Alisha's Story

Written by Julie Tsang, with and for the women from #UsToo, directed for film by Katja Roberts and performed by Holly Wilkinson. Alisha's Story was a film created in 2022 as part of a partnership project with Dr Alison Jobe, Durham University and Dr Helen Williams, Sunderland University to develop participatory theatre-based film to train criminal justice professionals. The resulting training programme "Developing Best Practice: Support for people with learning disabilities/autism who report sexual violence", was delivered in September 2023, to 200 police officers and third sector professionals based in Durham. The training features the film, participants are invited to explore the film from different perspectives; challenging prejudices, myths and stereotypes as the film brings voices to the room from our co-creators and their lived experience.

- 91% said they found the training useful and relevant to their job role.
- 97% said they would recommend the training to other professionals.

"Thought provoking in relation to victim/survivor expectations and requirements. Training is a good break from the day job which makes you reevaluate your own actions and behaviors to ensure best service for victims."

Rupture

Rupture was showcased over 4 performances in June 2023. Opening in HMP Low Newton to 30 women (including original cocreators) before West End Women and Girls Centre. In total we welcomed 278 audience members including partners, funders, CJS professionals and the public. Post show panel discussions, hosted by Catrina McHugh, with panellists including Professor Clare McGlynn (Durham University), Dr Kate O'Brien and Dr Hannah King (Researchers from Durham University and partners on Rupture), Holly Claydon (NEPACS worker and partner on Rupture), Narisha Lawson (Actor who played Destiny in Rupture), and Cheryl Byron (Co-creator on Key Change and Gold Star Member.)

'That's prison in 40 mins. I felt an overwhelming sense of freedom at the end' Co-creator.
'Very relatable, everything that was said, I felt like it was my voice. Thank you' Co-creator
'Absolutely nailed it...So true, I've heard this numerous times. This should be viewed first day of our training!' Officer

Open Clasp – Open Archive, Newcastle University 2023 – 2024

Having gifted our archive to Newcastle University, Open Clasp: Open Archive, led by, Professor Kate Chedgzoy situates the importance and role Open Clasp has played in the context of feminist theatre. Work began in 2019 to catalogue the archive with The Robinson Library. A Northern Bridge collaborative PhD 2023 - 2026 in partnership with Newcastle University began in October 2023 and is being carried out by Lucy Doig to further highlight our distinctive contribution and evaluate our impact on the socially engaged arts.

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Aspire Workshops

February – March 2024, we returned to work with Aspire Women's Centre in Chester-Le-Street, a long-term partner of the company. A group of 9 women who regularly attend the centre services attended our series of workshops designed to build confidence & inspire creativity.

"I started a six week workshop this week with Open Clasp; exploring the issues and life experiences of women...I saw true signs of inclusivity and understanding by the workshop lead. It truly felt like a safe space, without judgement or agenda. I'm incredibly excited to have this opportunity." Workshop Participant

Afternoon of Activism- International Women's Day 2024

In partnership with West End Women and Girls Centre we hosted a special screening of 'Don't Forget the Birds' followed by a panel discussion. 75 women attended the event. The panel was hosted by centre coordinator Huffy, and included Police and Crime Commissioner Kim McGuinness, our Gold Star Members and stars of Don't Forget the Birds, Cheryl and Abigail Byron, Catrina McHugh MBE and other special guests.

This event marked International Women's Day 2024 and celebrated 25 years of Open Clasp working with women in the community, including 10 years of working with women in prison. 'Don't Forget the Birds' is a beautiful example of how Cheryl and Abigail created award-winning theatre which reached thousands and centered their own experience in discussions about women involved in the Criminal Justice System or at risk of, and the impact on families.

HMP Askham Grange

On 14th December 2023, we ran a workshop in HMP/YOI Asham Grange for the National Literacy Trust to empower people with Literacy. The workshop explored creative writing.

Achievements and Recognition

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

Winner of the Outstanding Contribution to Social Change Award at the North East Charity Awards 2023

Recognised for our work throughout 2023 which including working directly with 50 women to make new theatre; convening public discussions on the long term systemic injustice faced by women and girls in our society with senior policy makers, academics, politicians and service providers, widening access as 10,000 people accessed our work digitally and delivering training using drama which features our co-created theatre to 300 professionals across the criminal justice and care sectors.

Shortlisted for Performance of the Year at the North East Culture Awards.

For Lasagna sell-out national tour to 10 venues programmed with community partnerships including small/medium scale arts venues, community spaces and HMP Low Newton in March 2023. Directed by Laura Lindow, cocreated with women who have lost children to the care system or are at risk of. Performed by Beth Crame and Zoe Lambert.

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Principal Funding Sources

Open Clasp has a robust funding model with its Arts Council NPO funding making up 45%, 22% coming from Commissions, Trusts and Foundations 16% (as detailed in the accounts) and Earned Income 10% (ticket sales, sales from assets and delivery of training). With the focus on income generation core costs allowing the company to continue to work towards its charitable objectives, as well as pursuing as wide a variety of funders as possible and seeking to encourage gifts and donations.

The decision of Arts Council England to award Open Clasp renewed NPO status from April 2023 to March 2026 provides the company with financial security and opportunities to grow and develop.

Plans for Future Periods

When planning future activities and projects the Trustees take into account the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Open Clasp starts the 2023-24 financial year in a good position. We are hugely grateful to Arts Council England for our continued investment as a National Portfolio Organisation from 2023 – 2026. We are also grateful to our funders who continue to support us with core funding including Community Foundation for Tyne & Wear and Northumberland, Barbour Foundation, Sir James Knott Foundation and The Shears Foundation. The trustees have committed funds from company reserves to the production of Mycelial which is the largest production budget in the history of the company, including a digital campaign and film capture to ensure a strong legacy and life for the project.

Projects for 2024/2025

Sharon Bailey iCare Project in association with Open Clasp

Sharon Bailey has commissioned Artistic Director, Catrina McHugh, to write the script for her newest project 'I Care.' Sharon Bailey has a strong history with the company, and I Care is a sequel to Home Alone (Catrina wrote the script Round Rooms for Sharon in 2019). This time the focus is on the paid and unpaid caregiver. As with Home Alone, Sharon Bailey has interviewed participants, collecting transcripts, recording voices, and writing a diary as she runs workshops and meets carers.

Open Clasp is supporting the production 'in association'. The first performance will take place in Newcastle's Grainger Market in w/c 10th June which is International Carer's Week.

Rupture

Rupture was commissioned through the Parental Rights in Prison Project (PriP) in partnership with Durham University and NEPACS. Our participatory arts research methods cocreated Rupture with 10 mothers in HMP Low Newton in 2023. Rupture will tour the Northeast including returning to HMP Low Newton and a series of community settings in Spring 2025. The tour will be accompanied by post show discussion and workshops and captured on film

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to be used by the project partners, HMPPS, and the wider sector, as an innovative tool to campaign for systems and programs to better serve mothers, their families, and their communities. It will be used to improve reduction in reoffending and in the rehabilitation of women returning to their communities after a custodial sentence by training staff and informing the design of services.

Mycelial International Film Tour with co-creators

Thanks to an Arts Council England Touring Grant, Mycelial digital theatre screenings & curated panel discussions will tour internationally in Autumn 2024. We will be in 13 community and criminal justice settings including UK, Ireland, North and South and New Zealand. The tour will take part during the #16 Days of global activism to end violence against all women (cisgender, transgender, and those who hold fluid identities that are subject to gender-based violence), girls and the Earth. Led by our specialist team this project will reach 7k live & digital audiences. Our award-winning distribution model (Digital Culture Awards) will ensure ownership of & by our communities & cocreators. Our network of 800+women's organisations & grassroots activists will support screenings in community/youth settings, arts spaces & prisons.

Developed with 40 cocreators with lived experience of sex work. Mycelial places their voices in the context of decriminalisation and raises public consciousness around their rights & safety. As a work of ethnographic significance Mycelial, will be used by us and our partners to support workforces across the women's sector, social services, health, care and criminal justice systems to engage with the issues raised and inform their practice and policies.

Audiences furthest from the arts will be supported to experience Mycelial film in their own community spaces or from the comfort of their own home. Giving them access to high quality theatre which is relatable in their communities. A resource package will support online access.

Us Too: Alisha's Story Training

New training using Alisha's Story will be developed with a Domestic Abuse focus for professional across adult safeguarding in the Durham County Council area.

Open Clasp – Open Archive, Newcastle University, Collaborative PhD

Situates the importance and role Open Clasp has played in the context of feminist theatre. Our collaborative PhD, Lucy Doig will continue to have a residency with our team actively archiving our work and researching the company's distinctive contribution and evaluating our impact on the socially engaged arts.

The Elswick Monologues (2024 – 2027)

A new project is emerging from our meaningful engagement with members of West End Women and Girls Centre. Our Artistic Director has been attending weekly brunch drop-in sessions and the project will look to interview individuals who are interested in co-writing their story as residents of Elswick. This project aims to celebrate talent, creativity and story. It will support women to share the injustices faced by them and their community and to ask for what needs to change.

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Reference and Administrative Details

Company registration number 05137687

Registered office The Stephenson Building, 173 Elswick Road,
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 6SQ

Trustees

For the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, the Board of Trustees is the Board of Directors of the charitable company and is referred to as the Trustees throughout this report.

The Trustees of Open Clasp during the period and to the date of signing this report are as follows:

Helen Ferguson Chair

Fiona O'Connor Vice Chair

Lara Jonah

Francesca Cross

Jacqueline Kell

Hayley Calvert

Leanne Sutherland

Charlotte Bennett

Independent Examiner Michelle Wright, MW Accounting Services, Woodgate House, 5c Wood Street, Gateshead, NE11 9NP

Bankers Unity Trust Bank, Nine Brindleyplace, 4 Oozells Square, Birmingham B1 2HB

Charity Bank, Fosse House, 182 High Street,
Tonbridge, TN9 1BE

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Documents

Open Clasp Theatre Company is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 25 May 2004.

It was registered as a charity on 8 February 2005. It was established under the Memorandum of Association that established its objects and powers and is governed under its Articles of Association, as amended by a special resolution dated 31 January 2005 and 15 October 2020.

Eligibility for membership of the charity and membership of the Board of Trustees is governed by the Memorandum and Articles of Association. There are no restrictions in the governing document on the operation of the charity other than those imposed by general charity law.

Structure and Governance

The Board of Trustees of Open Clasp Theatre Company are the charity Trustees and company Directors.

The charity currently has a Board of 8 non-executive Trustees who bring significant skills to the support of Open Clasp's activities. The Board meets a minimum of four times per year and conducts an Annual General Meeting annually.

The Trustees are elected from the membership at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The Trustees can co-opt additional Trustees between AGMs as required, but co-opted Trustees must stand for election at the next AGM.

Officers are elected by the Trustees at the first meeting following the AGM. The company appoints a Chair and a Vice Chair.

The Trustees meet quarterly, plus additional review and strategy meetings at least once a year and more often if deemed necessary.

Detailed written Board reports and an agenda are prepared and circulated in advance of meetings.

Two Board sub-groups meet as and when needed, covering financial, staffing and artistic matters. Other working groups are set up to support specific work as required.

Day to day management of the company is delegated to the following staff team:

Artistic Director	Catrina McHugh
Executive Director	Ellie Turner
Creative Producer	Carly McConnell
Finance and Office Manager	Rachel Errington
Producer	Erin Connor

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Project Coordinator
2024)

Colette Conlin (contract ended 12 April

Recruitment and Appointment of Board of Trustees

The Company's Trustees are either appointed by election at the AGM or co-opted to the Board between AGMs on the basis of nominations received from the membership or on recommendation from a member based on specialist skills, availability and commitment to the aims and objectives of the company.

Trustee Induction and Training

Trustees are inducted into the workings of the Company at a special meeting, held with individual appointees when they agree to be co-opted or are successfully elected. Trustees receive information on their legal roles and responsibilities and the Company's policies and procedures. Where the Board of Trustees feel specific training is needed, (for example, in safeguarding), it nominates specific Trustees to attend. Annually (usually in September) the Trustees' meeting includes a session where Trustees are reminded of their duties and obligations and are updated with any relevant changes in legislation or guidance relating to their role.

Company Limited by Guarantee

The charity is incorporated under the Companies Act 1985 and is limited by guarantee, each member having undertaken to contribute such amounts not exceeding £1 as may be required in the event of the company being wound up whilst he or she is still a member or within one year thereafter.

There are currently 163 members of the company (2023 – 159)

Pay policy for senior staff

The Board reviews the Artistic Director's and Executive Director's salary annually and is responsible for making any decisions about remuneration. Remuneration is benchmarked against similar roles within voluntary and community sector organisations of similar size in the North East.

Open Clasp Theatre Company has a Remuneration Policy which covers all staff. Senior staff are not treated differently to other staff and all benefits (including pension contributions) are applied equally across all staff groups.

Risk management

The Trustees have conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed and systems have been established to mitigate those risks including the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects and for ensuring the consistent quality of the delivery of all operational aspects of the charitable company. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they still meet the needs of the charity.

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Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

None of the trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between trustees or senior managers of the charity with suppliers must be disclosed to the full Board of trustees. In the current year no such related party transactions were reported. Trustees are asked to declare their interests before each board meeting and there is a Register of Interests.

Financial Review

The total income for the period was £396,802 (2023: £375,201). This income is allocated across respective funds on the Statement of Financial Activities in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice.

The Statement of Financial Activities for the period shows a net expenditure across all funds of (£76,229) (2023: net income £12,723).

The balance sheet indicates that at 31 March 2024 the total funds of the charity are £142,508 (2023: £218,737). Unrestricted funds of £79,308 (2023: £82,313) represent the reserves available to the organisation to fulfil its many existing commitments over the long term.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees aim to firstly hold a level of any unrestricted reserves which enables the charity to have sufficient financial resources to meet liabilities if Open Clasp's funding were to be withdrawn and/or it were unable to continue operating.

At present, the Trustees estimate that the Unrestricted Reserves required for such purposes amount to £83,003. The Trustees then aspire to retain an additional allowance of £45,000 to enable the charity to respond flexibly to issues or appropriate initiatives which might be indemnified outside of its annual budgeting process (Future Projects Fund).

The optimum level of unrestricted Reserves held is £127,313.

The charity's unrestricted Reserves on the 31 March 2023 are £124,308, including deferred budget to 24/25 (Total: £2,000).

Unrestricted Reserves £77,308
Future Projects Fund £45,000
Deferred Budget: £2,000

This policy will be reviewed by the Trustees on an annual basis as part of the charity's budgeting processes.

Principal funding sources

Arts Council England, Arts Council England Project Fund, Newcastle Cultural Investment Fund, The Shears Foundation, The Barbour Foundation, The Clothworkers Foundation,

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Community Foundation – Roland Cookson Community Fund, Community Foundation – Margaret and Dorothy Gordon Memorial Fund, The Hadrian Trust.

Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The Trustees have reviewed and considered relevant information, including the annual budget and future cash flows in making their assessment. In particular, in response to the cost-of-living crisis and the high competition for funding, the Trustees have revised their forecasts to take into account the impact on the business of possible scenarios brought on by the impact of global financial crisis, alongside the measures that they can take to mitigate the impact. Based on these assessments, given the measures that could be undertaken to mitigate the current adverse conditions, and the current resources available, the Trustees have concluded that they can continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the annual report and accounts.

Trustees responsibilities in relation to the financial statement

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing a trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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

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

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

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

By order of the board of trustees

Helen Ferguson, *Chair of the Board of Trustees*.  [Helen Ferguson 24/05/24, 2024 12:30 GMT+1](#)

24/05/24
Date:

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INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES

For the year ended 31 March 2024

I report on the financial statements of Open Clasp Theatre Company for the year ended 31 March 2024, which are set out on pages 15 to 28.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees (who are also directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Charities Act") and that an independent examination is needed.

The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a Member of the Association of Accounting Technicians.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act), and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

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 386 of the Companies Act 2006; or
- the accounts do not accord with such records; or
- the accounts do not comply with relevant accounting requirements under section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS102).

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

Michelle Wright
Woodgate House
5c Wood Street
Gateshead
Tyne and Wear
NE11 9NP

Date: 24/05/24


Michelle Wright (May 24, 2024 12:21 GMT+1)

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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

(INCLUDING SUMMARY INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	6	4,118	-	4,118	1,327
Charitable activities					
Grants and contracts	7	205,801	63,776	269,577	330,424
Other trading activities	8	74,134	-	74,134	13,977
Investments	9	2,771	-	2,771	2,009
Other income	10	46,202	-	46,202	27,464
Total income		333,026	63,776	396,802	375,201
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	11	312	-	312	-
Charitable activities				-	
Operation of the charity	12	425,400	47,319	472,719	362,478
Total expenditure		425,712	47,319	473,031	362,478
Net income/(expenditure)		(92,686)	16,457	(76,229)	12,723
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
Net income/(expenditure) and net movement of funds		(92,686)	16,457	(76,229)	12,723
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		216,994	1,743	218,737	206,014
Total funds carried forward		124,308	18,200	142,508	218,737

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities

The notes on pages 17 to 28 form an integral part of these accounts.

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Charity Number 1108000
Company Number 05137687**BALANCE SHEET**

As at 31 March 2024

	Notes	£	Total 2024 £	£	Total 2023 £
<u>Fixed assets</u>					
Tangible assets	19		508		1,769
<i>Total fixed assets</i>			508		1,769
<u>Current assets</u>					
Debtors	20	81,814		34,832	
Cash at bank and in hand	21	82,549		218,887	
<i>Total current assets</i>		164,363		253,719	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	22	(22,363)		(36,751)	
<i>Net current assets</i>			142,001		216,968
<i>Total assets less current liabilities</i>			142,508		218,737
<i>Total net assets or liabilities</i>			142,508		218,737
<u>Funds of the charity</u>					
Unrestricted income funds			77,308		82,313
Designated funds			47,000		134,681
Restricted income funds			18,200		1,743
<i>Total funds</i>			142,508		218,737

The company was entitled to an exemption from audit under s477 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 responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with the respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

The notes on pages 17 to 28 form an integral part of these accounts.

These financial statements were approved by the Board on: 23/05/24

and are signed on its behalf by:

Helen Ferguson

Chair of Board of Trustees


Helen Ferguson (May 24, 2024 12:20 GMT+1)

OPEN CLASP THEATRE COMPANY

(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2024

1 Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

2 Basis of accounting

2.1 Basis of preparation

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) – Charities SORP (FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

Open Clasp Theatre Company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

2.2 Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. In making their assessment the trustees have reviewed and considered relevant information, including their annual budget and future cash flows. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the trustees have revised their forecasts to take into account measures that they can take with the current resources available to mitigate the impact of the current adverse conditions. The trustees are of the view that the immediate future of the charity for the next 12 months is secure and that on this basis the charity is a going concern.

3 Income

3.1 Recognition of income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the resources, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is more likely than not that the resources will be received and the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability

3.2 Offsetting

There has been no offsetting of assets and liabilities, or income and expenses, unless required or permitted by FRS102 SORP or FRS102.

3.3 Grants and donations

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria of income recognition are met.

OPEN CLASP THEATRE COMPANY

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2024

3.4 Donated goods and services

Donated goods are measured at fair value (the amount for which the asset could be exchanged) unless impractical to do so.

Donated services and facilities are included in the SoFA when received at the value of the gift to the charity provided that the value of the gift can be measured reliably. Donated services and facilities that are consumed immediately are recognised as income with the equivalent amount recognised as an expense under the appropriate heading in the SoFA.

3.5 Volunteer help

The value of volunteer help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the trustees' annual report.

3.6 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

3.7 Income from membership subscriptions

Membership subscriptions received in the nature of a gift are recognised in donations and legacies.

Membership subscriptions which gives a member the right to buy services or other benefits are recognised as income earned from the provision of goods and services as income from charitable activities.

3.8 Investment gains and losses

This includes any realised or unrealised gains or losses on the sale of investments and any gain or loss resulting from revaluing investments to market value at the end of the year.

3.9 Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the

4 Expenditure and liabilities

4.1 Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised when it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

4.2 Charitable activities

Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of creating professional theatre and other activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.

OPEN CLASP THEATRE COMPANY

(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2024

4.3 Governance and support costs

Support costs have been allocated between governance cost and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

4.4 Irrecoverable VAT

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

4.5 Creditors

The charity has creditors which are measured at settlement amounts less any trade discounts.

4.6 Provisions for liabilities

A liability is measured on recognition at its historical cost and then subsequently measured at the best estimate of the amount required to settle the obligation at the reporting date.

5 Assets

5.1 Tangible fixed assets for use by the charity

Individual fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised at cost and are depreciated over their estimated useful economic lives on a straight line basis, a full years depreciation charge is applied in the year of acquisition and no charge is made in the year of disposal:

Fixtures & fittings	Straight line over five years
IT and office equipment	Straight line over three years

OPEN CLASP THEATRE COMPANY

(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Analysis of income

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
6 Donations and legacies				
Donations and Gift Aid	4,118	-	4,118	1,327
	<u>4,118</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,118</u>	<u>1,327</u>
7 Charitable activities				
<u>Income from grants and contracts</u>				
Arts Council England - NPO	180,301	-	180,301	180,301
Arts Council England - Project Grant	-	30,800	30,800	-
Newcastle Cultural Investment Fund	-	25,000	25,000	25,000
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	-	-	30,000
Sir James Knott Trust	10,000	-	10,000	-
Hadrian Trust	-	1,000	1,000	1,000
Community Foundation - Margaret and Dorothy Gordon Memorial Fund	-	700	700	-
Community Foundation	-	4,000	4,000	13,450
Barbour Foundation	10,000	-	10,000	-
Clothworkers Foundation	-	2,276	2,276	-
Regional Theatre Young Directors Scheme Grant	-	-	-	800
University of Glasgow	-	-	-	4,250
Durham University	-	-	-	26,223
Sunderland University	-	-	-	14,900
The Shears Foundation	5,500	-	5,500	5,000
<u>Income from contracts</u>				
NCJAA - Inspiring Futures	-	-	-	29,500
	<u>205,801</u>	<u>63,776</u>	<u>269,577</u>	<u>330,424</u>
8 Other trading activities				
Earned income - conferences, training workshops & touring income	74,134	-	74,134	13,977
	<u>74,134</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>74,134</u>	<u>13,977</u>

OPEN CLASP THEATRE COMPANY

(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Analysis of income continued	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
9 Income from investments				
Bank interest	2,771	-	2,771	2,009
	<u>2,771</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,771</u>	<u>2,009</u>
10 Other income				
Other income	5,100	-	5,100	5,000
Theatre Tax Relief	41,102	-	41,102	22,464
	<u>46,202</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>46,202</u>	<u>27,464</u>

Income was £396,802 (2023: £375,201) of which £333,026 was unrestricted or designated (2023: £369,951) and £63,776 was restricted (2023: £5,250)

OPEN CLASP THEATRE COMPANY

(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
11 Raising funds				
Staging fundraising events	312	-	312	-
	<u>312</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>312</u>	<u>-</u>
12 Charitable activities				
<u>Direct costs</u>				
Durham PCC Us Too Training	-	147	147	-
Mycelial (Two Camps) project costs	28,360	43,300	71,660	620
Workplace Development Programme	-	-	-	44,498
Lasagna (Pause) Project	3,218	-	3,218	11,962
Rupture project costs	9,737	-	9,737	87
Project staff costs	90,182	1,037	91,219	41,579
One off projects including digital development	555	2,835	3,390	3,193
Staff costs	255,913	-	255,913	219,749
PR & marketing costs	7,342	-	7,342	6,256
<u>Support costs</u>				
Staff support costs	3,474	-	3,474	2,877
Depreciation	1,261	-	1,261	1,085
Office administration & running costs	20,236	-	20,236	21,071
Subscriptions & publications	2,384	-	2,384	2,240
<u>Governance costs</u>				
Independent examiner's fees for reporting on the accounts	1,000	-	1,000	842
Legal and professional fees	465	-	465	733
Trustees meeting costs	515	-	515	1,624
Annual review and AGM costs	542	-	542	3,909
Bank charges	216	-	216	152
	<u>425,400</u>	<u>47,319</u>	<u>472,719</u>	<u>362,478</u>

Expenditure on charitable activities was £473,031 (2023: £362,478) of which £425,712 was unrestricted or designated (2023: £355,191) and £47,319 was restricted (2023: £7,287)

13 Fees for examination of the accounts

	2024 £	2023 £
Independent examiner's fees for reporting on the accounts	1,000	1,000
	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>

OPEN CLASP THEATRE COMPANY

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2024

14 Analysis of staff costs and the cost of key management personnel

	2024 £	2023 £
Salaries and wages	223,812	191,793
Social security costs	23,355	20,444
Pension costs (defined contribution pension plan)	8,746	7,512
	255,913	219,749

No employee received remuneration above £60,000 (2023: nil)

The key management personnel of the charity, comprise the Trustees, Artistic Director and the Executive Director. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £104,881. (2023: £101,603)

15 Staff numbers

The average monthly head count was 6 staff (2023: 6 staff) and the average monthly number of full-time equivalent employees during the year were as follows:

	2024 Number	2023 Number
The parts of the charity in which the employee's work		
Artistic production and support	6.0	6.0
	6.0	6.0

Sessional staff are hired on a project by project basis and are included within charitable activities as direct project costs as they typically relate to specific production or projects.

16 Transactions with trustees

None of the trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits from an employment with their charity or a related entity.

Trustees' expenses

The following detail the expenses incurred by the trustees.

	2024 £	2023 £
Travel	378	9
	378	9

Transaction(s) with related parties

There have been no related party transactions in the reporting period.

17 Defined contribution pension scheme

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund.

The employer's pension costs represent contributions payable by the charity to the fund and amount to £8,746 (2023: £7,512). There was £6,332 outstanding as at 31 March 2024 (2023: £2,058)

OPEN CLASP THEATRE COMPANY

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2024

18 Corporation Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objectives.

19 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures & fittings £	IT & office equipment £	Total £
Cost			
Balance brought forward	3,947	10,089	14,036
Additions	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-
Balance carried forward	3,947	10,089	14,036
Depreciation			
Basis	SL	SL	
Rate	20%	33%	
Balance brought forward	3,947	8,320	12,267
Depreciation charge for year	-	1,261	1,261
Disposals	-	-	-
Balance carried forward	3,947	9,581	13,528
Net book value			
Brought forward	-	1,769	1,769
Carried forward	-	508	508

20 Debtors and prepayments (receivable within 1 year)

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	15,028	2,411
Prepayments & accrued income	66,785	31,199
Other debtors	-	1,222
	81,814	34,832

21 Cash at bank and in hand

	2024 £	2023 £
Short term deposits	55,320	188,313
Cash at bank and in hand	27,229	30,574
	82,549	218,887

OPEN CLASP THEATRE COMPANY

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2024

22 Creditors and accruals (payable within 1 year)

	2024 £	2023 £
Taxation and social security	5,587	5,328
Pension	6,332	2,058
Accruals		
Independent examination of accounts	1,000	1,000
Other accruals	1,720	4,570
Deferred income	7,724	23,795
	<u>22,363</u>	<u>36,751</u>

23 Deferred income

Deferred income comprises of advance payments from grants that relate to future periods

	2024 £
Balance brought forward	23,795
Amount released to income earned from charitable activities	(23,795)
Amount deferred in year	7,724
Balance carried forward	<u>7,724</u>

24 Events after the end of the reporting period

No events (not requiring adjustment to the accounts) have occurred after the end of the reporting period but before the accounts are authorised which relate to conditions that arose after the end of the reporting period.

OPEN CLASP THEATRE COMPANY

(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2024

25 Analysis of charitable funds

Analysis of movements in unrestricted funds

For the year ending 31 March 2024

	Fund balances brought forward £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Fund balances carried forward £
Unrestricted funds					
General unrestricted fund	82,313	333,026	(425,712)	87,681	77,308
Designated funds					
Future projects	45,000	-	-	-	45,000
Mycelial	89,681	-	-	(89,681)	-
25th Anniversary budget	-	-	-	2,000	2,000
Totals	216,994	333,026	(425,712)	-	124,308

For the year ending 31 March 2023

	Fund balances brought forward £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Fund balances carried forward £
Unrestricted funds					
General unrestricted fund	183,148	369,951	(355,191)	(115,595)	82,313
Designated funds					
Future projects	20,000	-	-	25,000	45,000
Mycelial	-	-	-	89,681	89,681
Totals	203,148	369,951	(355,191)	(914)	216,994

Purpose of unrestricted funds

General unrestricted fund	The 'free reserves' after allowing for designated funds
Designated funds	Fund set aside for developing future projects

OPEN CLASP THEATRE COMPANY

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2024

25 Analysis of charitable funds continued**Analysis of movement in restricted funds****For the year ending 31 March 2024**

	Fund balances brought forward	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Fund balances carried forward
Restricted funds	£	£	£	£	£
Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner – Operation Payback Fund	1,184	-	(1,184)	-	-
Arts Council England Project Grant	-	30,800	(12,600)	-	18,200
Community Foundation - Newcastle Cultural Investment Project Fund	559	25,000	(25,559)	-	-
Hadrian Trust	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
Clothworkers Foundation	-	2,276	(2,276)	-	-
	-	4,000	(4,000)	-	-
Community Foundation - Roland Cookson Community Fund					
Community Foundation - Margaret and Dorothy Gordon Memorial Fund	-	700	(700)	-	-
Totals	1,744	63,776	(47,320)	-	18,200

Analysis of movement in restricted funds**For the year ending 31 March 2023**

	Fund balances brought forward	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Fund balances carried forward
Restricted funds	£	£	£	£	£
Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner – Operation Payback Fund	1,666	-	(482)	-	1,184
Regional Theatre Young Directors Scheme Grant	1,200	800	(2,914)	914	-
Community Foundation - Newcastle Cultural Investment Project Fund	-	3,450	(2,891)	-	559
Hadrian Trust	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
Totals	2,866	5,250	(7,286)	914	1,744

OPEN CLASP THEATRE COMPANY

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 31 March 2024

25 Analysis of charitable funds continued

Purpose of restricted funds

Restricted funds represent income resources used for a specific purpose within the charity as identified by the donor.

Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner – Operation Payback Fund	To support production costs for a participatory theatre-based training course for police officers and related service providers working with women with learning disabilities/ autism who report rape/ sexual assault.
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Arts Council England Project Grant	To deliver the Mycelial film and international cinema tour 2024-25
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Community Foundation - Newcastle Cultural Investment Project Fund	To support the delivery of a performance showcase of new work, as part of a weeklong programme of creative and cultural events at West End Women and Girls Centre
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Hadrian Trust	To support Open Clasp in the delivery of Bronze Arts Award to young women in HMP Low Newton
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Clothworkers Foundation	Capital grant to purchase projection equipment to support community touring
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Community Foundation - Roland Cookson Community Fund	To support accessibility around Mycelial to co-creators
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Community Foundation - Margaret and Dorothy Gordon Memorial Fund	To support accessibility around Mycelial to co-creators
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26 Capital commitments

As at 31 March 2024, the charity had no capital commitments (2023 -£nil)

27 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	508	-	508	1,769
Cash at bank and in hand	64,349	18,200	82,549	218,887
Other net current assets/(liabilities)	59,451	-	59,451	(1,919)
	124,308	18,200	142,508	218,737

Open Clasp Full doc YE 2024 v3

Final Audit Report

2024-05-24

Created:	2024-05-24
By:	Michelle Wright (michelle-wright@hotmail.com)
Status:	Signed
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