

COTTON SHED THEATRE COMPANY

England & Wales · Charity number 1123037

Details

Other names COTTON SHED

Status Registered

Legal form Other

Registered 2008-03-03

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address Haslingden Primary School
Ryefield Avenue
Haslingden
Rossendale
Lancashire
BB4 4BJ

Phone 01706 214309

Email office@cottonshedtheatre.co.uk

Website www.cottonshedtheatre.co.uk

Activities

Objects: The Charity's objects ("the objects") are:(1) The advancement of education more particularly in the field of music, theatre, drama and dance, for the benefit of all age groups including (but not limited to) those who do or may require help with mobility, communication, behaviour, self-help skills or with social development primarily in the North West of England(2) Promoting social inclusion by providing and managing services for the benefit of people at risk of social exclusion from society as a result of age, disability (whether physical or mental), chronic illness including (without limitation) learning disabilities or autism spectrum disorder primarily in the North West of England.

Activities: Runs inclusive theatre workshops and produces inclusive performances for all. Anyone of any age with or without additional needs can become a member and take part.

Classification

- **How:** Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** Disability, Arts/culture/heritage/science
- **Who:** Children/young People, People With Disabilities, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** UNDEFINED. IN PRACTICE LANCASHIRE
- Lancashire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£40,795	£88,737	-	-
2023-12-31	£32,576	£62,144	-	-
2022-12-31	£5,603	£35,479	-	-
2021-12-31	£39,970	£25,662	-	-
2020-12-31	£70,538	£49,258	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Keith Lofthouse	Chair	2025-04-01
Amanda Jayne Robinson		2025-11-01
Anna Rebecca Pryce		2025-11-01
Glyn Ellis		2015-04-20
Sue Wood		2025-04-01
Victoria Claire Foulds		2023-09-11

COTTON SHED THEATRE COMPANY

England & Wales - Charity number 1123037

Accounts

Cotton Shed Trustees Report 2025

Chair of the Charity : Keith Lofthouse

Treasurer : Sue Wood

Trustees :

Glyn Ellis

Victoria Foulds

Summary Report for the period of April 2024 – March 2025

Treasurer's Introduction

Cotton Shed Theatre Company is now in its 18th year of inclusive theatre workshops and performances for all.

This period marks a decrease in delivery as long running 'Reaching Communities' funding has come to an end including as part of this fund, delivery of 'Sign & Rhyme' and 'Silver Shed' projects. These strands of delivery have seen success and engagement with our community since the company's restart in 2022. However, in discussion with trustees, artistic practitioners and with support from Horse + Bamboo – there is a clear desire and need to focus Cotton Shed activity back to a 'core' of theatre workshops and performances for all ages.

On behalf of the board, I would like to thank outgoing chair, Louise Parish and outgoing Treasurer, Brian Miller for their many years of support, advice and leadership to the charity. Louise and Brian led Cotton Shed through a period of evolution during restart of activities in 22 - 23, their work in developing the partnership with Horse + Bamboo and maintaining relationships with funders, has been instrumental to the continuation of the charity.

Although currently without multi-year funding in place, Cotton Shed Theatre Company has continued to deliver workshops during 2024 with the support of People's Health Trust, Lancashire County Council and of course, the continued support of our membership.

Partnership with Horse + Bamboo

Partnership with Horse + Bamboo to project manage core delivery continues and remains a valuable connection for both companies.

It is noted that a relationship would continue if the formal partnership did not – with continued support and guidance. The hope is that with further funding secured, this relationship would be able to continue.

Delivery

Workshops

During the last period, workshops have been run for Beginners (4-8 years), Children (8-12 years), Youth (12-16 years) and Company 16+ years based on the following:

- **Beginners** - learn the basics of theatre skills, speech development and confidence building in a nurturing and supportive environment. Cotton Shed employ a variety of EYFS methods to achieve this such as repetition, song and role play.
- **Childrens** - offers the chance for increased performance opportunity, and more collaborative learning. The children learn the art of devising and can experiment with the foundations of their theatrical skills. Within this group, Cotton Shed heavily focuses on emotional expression, identity, and social skills.
- **Youth** - takes a deeper approach to learning, focusing on the use of script and different theatrical practitioners. Many of our youth group articulated that they do not have the opportunity to complete a drama GCSE/further education at their schools, so they welcome and enjoy this learned method of workshop.
- **Company** - consists of all adults with additional needs. They are a strong cohort that work together to create art that they feel best represents them. Our company group is very much internally led, meaning that our practitioners interpret and oversee their work, but the practice is very much company driven.

Performances & Sharings

By making the most of new Artistic Practitioner contacts and expertise, this year has seen CottonShed members dance like never before, and have the opportunity to perform on stages and in events across the North West, to audiences of thousands.

Company & Youth Performance - The Lowry, Salford Dance Explosion (June 2024)

Devised dance piece performed alongside My Life Legacy members.

Members : 7 | Audience : 450+

Company Performance - Shhhhh, Waterfoot Wakes (July 2024)

Self-devised show about river pollution in Waterfoot.

Members : 10 | Audience : 120

Beginners' & Children's Performance – Bacup & Stacksteads Carnival (July 2024)

Two devised dance pieces and participation in community parade.

Members : 18 | Audience : 300+

Beginners' & Children's Performances – In the Dead of Night & Stories from the Shadows (October 2024)

Two devised Halloween shows performed for parents at Horse + Bamboo Theatre.

Members : 22 | Audience : 63

Company & Youth Performance – Blackpool Opera House (December 2024)

Devised dance piece performed alongside Theatre Works & My Life Legacy members.

Members : 18 | Audience : 2,700+

COTTONSHED ACCOUNTS
01 JANUARY - 31ST DECEMBER 2024

Balance Brought Forward	EXPENDITURE	RECEIPTS
	correct with bank statement	£ 63,569.59
1 Salaries	£ 42,792.70	
2 Accommodation, Travel, Subsistence & trips	£ 617.26	
3 Petty Cash		
4 Publicity		
5 Communication		
6 Insurance	£ 419.32	
7 Subscriptions/Membership		
8 Grants/Donations including Gift Aid & Virgin Money Giving	£ 15,730.00	£ 40,102.61
9 Summer School		
10 Recruitment		
11 Training		
12 Production Costs	£ 115.00	
13 Production Income		
14 Resources		
15 Sign and Rhyme		
15a Sign and Rhyme Parties		
16 Misc		£ 317.20
17 Friendshed (Active Communities)		
18 Near Neighbours		
19 Silvershed		
20 Cottonshed Room Hire	£ 3,472.50	£ 375.00
21 Shine Alive		
22 Audit of Accounts	£ 75.00	
23 Lotteries Registration		
24 Company Connect		
25 COVID-19 Refunds		
26 Sales		
27 Songwriting Shed		
28 Governance	£ 25,515.20	
29 Legal		
	£ 88,736.98	£ 104,364.40
	correct with bank statement	£ 15,627.42



TREASURER 23/6/25

me
4/06/2025

INDEPENDENT
EXAMINER



Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of COTTON SHED THEATRE COMPANY

On accounts for the year ended 2024 Charity no (if any) 1123037

Set out on pages (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD / MM / YYYY.

Responsibilities and basis of report As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
• the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 4/06/2025

Name: Natalie McMahon

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

Address: 14, Harlech Close, Haslingden, BB4 6TL

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

COTTON SHED THEATRE COMPANY

England & Wales - Charity number 1123037

Accounts

Cotton Shed Trustees Report 2024



Chair of the Charity: Louise Parrish

Treasurer: Brian Miller

Trustees:
Victoria Foulds
Glyn Ellis
Corey Scott

Summary Report for the period April 2023 – March 2024.

Treasurer's Introduction

Cotton Shed Theatre Company has completed its 17th year of inclusive theatre workshops/sessions throughout East Lancashire.

During the last 12 months Cotton Shed has continued to focus on all activities within the Reaching Communities Bid and developed approaches to its delivery after the culmination of this funding.

This year we have engaged over 1000 people in workshops and shows through The Shed programme and they have performed to wonderfully appreciative audiences, often full houses. Feedback from members and parents has continued to be very positive, such as the following:

"Ollie struggles to attend most groups, and has had an unpleasant time at school recently. Cotton Shed is his safe space, and I don't know what we'd do without it. Ollie always leaves the sessions so happy and talks about all of his friends."

Parent comment

Without the long-term investment from Reaching Communities it is unlikely that Cotton Shed would have survived the hiatus caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. It is only because this funding was in hand, and the determination of long-standing participants that it is still in existence to deliver highly regarded, well-attended theatre workshops.

On behalf of the board, I wish to offer thanks to The Community Fund for this sustained support, together with our partners, Horse & Bamboo, our new artistic practitioners, our volunteers and our members.

Although the Reaching Communities funding came to an end in March 2024, with ongoing funding from The People's Health Trust and Lancashire County Council, we are confident that we can continue to deliver our workshop programme for the next year through to March 2025.

Partnership with Horse + Bamboo

Partnership with Horse + Bamboo to project manage the Reaching Communities bid delivery within its last two years and to consider strategic development and fundraising has bedded in during the last 12 months and remained a valuable connection for both companies.

This partnership has brought about new opportunities to engage further across the Rossendale Valley, offering workshop participants the opportunity to perform at This Here Festival in Bacup and at Horse + Bamboo's festival Waterfoot Wakes.

The contract between Cotton Shed & Horse + Bamboo is in place until July 2024 (based on 3-monthly review points at board meetings) and both organisations now share a trustee who sits across both boards. As we pass the end of this funding, we have achieved funding for all core workshop activity to continue until spring 2025 and Horse + Bamboo continues to work with the board on strategic review and recruitment.

Workshops

During the last period, workshops have been run for Beginners (4-8 years), Children (8-12 years), Youth (12-16 years) and Company 16+ years based on the following:

- **Beginners** - learn the basics of theatre skills, speech development and confidence-building in a nurturing and supportive environment. Cotton Shed employ a variety of EYFS methods to achieve this such as repetition, song and role play.
- **Childrens** - offers the chance for increased performance opportunity, and more collaborative learning. The children learn the art of devising and can experiment with the foundations of their theatrical skills. Within this group, Cotton Shed heavily focuses on emotional expression, identity, and social skills.
- **Youth** - takes a deeper approach to learning, focusing on the use of script and different theatrical practitioners. Many of our youth group articulated that they do not have the opportunity to complete a drama GCSE/further education at their schools, so they welcome and enjoy this learned method of workshop.
- **Company** - consists of all adults with additional needs. They are a strong cohort that work together to create art that they feel best represents them. Our company group is very much internally led, meaning that our practitioners interpret and oversee their work, but the practice is very much company driven.

Workshops are tailored to meet the needs and interests of members, ensuring that we focus on key development areas for individual age groups. Our main driving force continues to be inclusivity; guaranteeing that each member, regardless of need knows they are welcome, accepted, and respected. Cotton Shed continues to serve purpose to those who perhaps might not feel included elsewhere. Workshops offer the unique opportunity to truly belong without limitation, and wholeheartedly feel a part of something special.

A significant level of Cotton Shed Theatre Workshop members have additional needs, or some form of disability, equating to roughly half of Cotton Shed's total regular membership to theatre workshops.

As our theatre workshops have gained a loyal following, our focus has been on creating work that allows the members to feel they are in a 'cohort' of performers who work well together and make friendships along the way. Many members have begun to age-up into the older groups which has proved that our membership remains loyal and that our offerings of different age groups ensures that we are reaching as many people as possible. During the last 12 months, our practitioners are currently trying to grow our youth membership by offering taster sessions, and intend to soon be offering 'Arts Award'.

Performances & Sharings

Company Sharing - 'The Workshop'

Company group performed in an annual Christmas production that was created by the group and structured by the artistic practitioners. This year's performance was inspired by training from Chicken Shed, sparking inspiration for a performance with lots of comedy, moments of love and support, and also the feeling of monotony. The audience absolutely loved a hilarious take with members as Elves, and the style of performance gave lots of freedom to

members to improvise and have loads of fun on stage as the structure allowed for authentic moments to happen on stage.

Cotton Shed full performance - The Eras Tour

All groups were given the theme of 'time travel' in their workshops, which was used to create inspiration for a full cast performance. After workshopping ideas and exploring different eras throughout time, each group at Cotton Shed decided on their own era throughout time that they wanted to delve deeper into, and ultimately create a performance about. Beginners group explored victorian schools, children's group looked at World War 2 whilst youth looked at auction halls throughout time, and Company of course chose the era of Mr William Shakespeare.

Each group took to the stage at Horse+Bamboo where a festival of events was hosted where the groups performed individually to their own audience.

This was a huge success as all of the other groups at Cotton Shed could watch each other and look at what they'd been working on in workshops. This social event was well received by the audiences including a raffle and a quiz; creating a fabulous sense of community!

Sign and Rhyme

Sign & Rhyme sessions took place on Mondays at Horse + Bamboo. The children and adults alike enjoyed being in the theatre space. The Tor View sessions on other days were more learned based, focusing on learning from the puppets. All Sign & Rhyme sessions retained a focus on signing through songs and different puppets, demonstrated by the performers. Cotton Shed practitioners learned a range of Makaton, BSL and baby signs, as a means of offering a variety of options to sign for parents, to suit their own needs.

Silver Shed

During the last year Silver Shed proved to be a vital part of what Cotton Shed has to offer. It's a project that remains popular, and in demand, with a large waiting list for Schools and care homes across the Rossendale valley. We are extremely proud of this project, and what it means to the participants.

This year Silver Shed consisted of elderly participants exchanging letters with a pen-pal who was assigned to them from a local primary school. Participants were carefully selected based on hobbies, interests and personality. These sessions were offered to care homes as a six-week block of recurring weekly visits, both for practicality and to increase the impact upon participants. Most importantly, it gave Artistic Practitioners a chance to work with residents in a more in depth and personal way, to really understand, translate and do justice to their stories onto the page.

Collaborations

Beware of The Doll (November 2023)

Cotton Shed Children's cohort worked closely with The Whitaker Museum to devise a performance based on 'The Cabinet of Curiosities'. On the 25th May 2023, the Children's group attended The Whitaker to gather inspiration for their own performance. They were able to sit where they wanted and write/draw about any inspiration that came to them from the museum space, or items situated within. These sheets were then gathered ready to use as inspiration in our workshops, bringing their ideas to life.

The puppet doll that resides in The Whitaker became the main source of inspiration for the children, and our poster design actually used one member's original concept. This event sold 70+ tickets and attracted members of the public who did not previously know about Cotton Shed. One spectator at the end even asked for the script to be sent over for her son to read, as he loved the story. That child now attends Cotton Shed on a weekly basis.

Overall, this project taught our children's group a huge amount about Theatre making. They developed their devising skills, chose their own characters and costumes, but most importantly they were crucial to the development of the story and its plot. The members all felt a sense of pride after this performance, and immediately requested a 'Beware of The Doll: Part 2'. This project strengthened our cohort and has solidified our Children's group as an essential part of Cotton Shed.

ICARUS (July 2023)

As part of the Waterfoot Wakes festival, our Company group devised and performed a physical retelling of the Icarus story. The festival's theme was 'elements' so we began exploring earth, water, air and fire through movement. We explored how our bodies might move to embody each element separately, and then we spoke about how we can assign narrative. During a discussion, a connection was made to Greek Mythology and its prevalence of the four elements, especially the way that Gods and Goddesses exist as personified depictions of the elements.

This discussion led us on to the story of Icarus flying closely to the sun, and we quickly realised that the story involved all four elements.

Company used Greek choral devices to tell the story, and followed the beat of a single drum to keep time. This stripped back performance was very effective for a small scale performance at a festival, and excellent audience feedback was received.

Bacup & Stacksteads Carnival (June 2023)

Our Beginners & Children's group took to the stage at Bacup & Stacksteads carnival to perform pirate themed dances. The Beginners were actually invited to open the stage by the BASCO chair, by performing their dance from the 'Panto Puzzle' performance, they performed 'How far I'll go' from Moana whilst Children's group chose to perform as Pirates who were shipwrecked, to 'Under the sea' from The Little Mermaid.

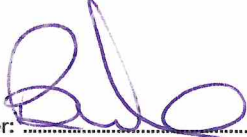
Both groups performed to crowds consisting of over 100+ people, and had lots of fun whilst doing it. Cotton Shed even ended up at the front of the parade, which was an excellent opportunity for advertising and promotion. Our beginners group also appeared on the front page of The Rossendale Free Press.

Rossendale's Monologue Mash Up (April 2023)

This event was created in collaboration with two local drama schools: Footlights and Drama Llama, as well as Horse + Bamboo. The idea was to bring together local talent and to celebrate each other, rather than competition. This showcase allowed individuals from our Beginners and youth group to opt into a performance over the Easter Break, ensuring some activity ran throughout the school holidays. Members chose their own monologues, had a day to rehearse 1:1 with practitioners and then performed the day after. This style worked sufficiently well to plan the same activity to run again in 2024's winter season, solidifying this collaboration as an annual event.

COTTONSHED ACCOUNTS
01 JANUARY - 31ST DECEMBER 2023

	EXPENDITURE	RECEIPTS
Balance Brought Forward	correct with bank statement p346	£ 93,137.13
1 Salaries	£ 47,590.00	
2 Accommodation, Travel, Subsistence & trips		
3 Petty Cash		
4 Publicity	£ 12.46	
5 Communication	£ 709.37	
6 Insurance	£ 419.32	
7 Subscriptions/Membership		
8 Grants/Donations including Gift Aid & Virgin Money Giving		£ 32,576.41
9 Summer School		
10 Recruitment		
11 Training	£ 326.00	
12 Production Costs		
13 Production Income		
14 Resources	£ 6.80	
15 Sign and Rhyme		
15a Sign and Rhyme Parties		
16 Misc		
17 Friendshed (Active Communities)		
18 Near Neighbours		
19 Silvershed		
20 Cottonshed Room Hire	£ 3,405.00	
21 Shine Alive		
22 Audit of Accounts	£ 75.00	
23 Lotteries Registration		
24 Company Connect		
25 COVID-19 Refunds		
26 Sales		
27 Songwriting Shed		
28 Governance	£ 7,800.00	
29 Legal	£ 1,800.00	
	£ 62,143.95	£ 125,713.54
	correct with bank statement p	£ 63,569.59

Treasurer:  23/5/24
 Julie Burton Date

Examiner:  1/7/2024
 Natalie McMahon Date



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Cotton Shed Theatre Company

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31/12/2023

**Charity no
(if any)**

1123037

Set out on pages

(If the charity is a limited liability partnership, please provide the partnership number)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2023.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

Date:

22/10/2024

Name:

NATALIE McMAHON

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

N/A

Address:

14 HARLECH CLOSE, HASLINGDEN, ROSSENDALE B4 6TL

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

COTTON SHED THEATRE COMPANY

England & Wales - Charity number 1123037

Accounts

Cotton Shed Trustees Report 2022



Acting Chair of the Charity: Louise Parrish

Treasurer: Brian Miller

Trustees:
Lewis Gallagher
Glyn Ellis
Corey Scott

Summary Report for the period April 2021 - March 2022.

Acting Chair's Introduction

Cotton Shed Theatre Company has completed its 15th year of inclusive theatre workshops/sessions throughout East Lancashire.

The last 12 months have been particularly challenging for Cotton Shed due to the pandemic and departure of long-serving senior staff, prompting the Board to re-assess the fundamental aims of the charity. However, the positive feedback received from members and supporters has reaffirmed the need and enthusiasm for Cotton Shed within the Rossendale community to promote and support inclusivity through performing arts to all generations, without the barrier of high fees associated with commercial theatre organizations. The link between the charity and its founding schools, including an Outstanding educational establishment for pupils with Special Needs, ensures that Cotton Shed is truly focused on providing a service and experience that is relevant and required by its members in the future.

To this end, the Board is determined to ensure that future activities remain consistent to its core purpose. In particular, the ability to deliver stimulating, inspirational and inventive inclusive workshops is central to our new recruitment strategy. Opportunities to develop partnerships with similar charities will continue to be built, with the objective of a recruiting a wider, more flexible artistic team to undertake delivery of both workshop sessions and wider community activities, such as Silver Shed and Sign and Rhyme.

On behalf of the Board, I wish to thank staff, and especially our two Artistic Leaders, that have departed in the last 12 months for all their hard work and dedication in making Cotton Shed the success it has been in recent years. With a refreshed plan and new Artistic Practitioners in place, we are confident that this success can be maintained and the charity can continue to flourish when activities begin again later in 2022.

Workshop Activities

Performance workshops delivered via weekly sessions bring together people from various backgrounds with varying abilities. These sessions seek to breakdown social barriers and give everyone the opportunity to be creative and create outstanding theatre.

Workshop and production activities during the past year were significantly hampered by both continued Covid restrictions and then subsequent departure of our two senior artistic staff.

As interest from the membership for online sessions had waned, it was decided that re-commencing live sessions was priority to enable interaction and minimise any isolation that members may have felt. Consequently, face-to-face workshops began again for Beginners', Children and Company on 12 April 2021 for the six-week period until Whitsun. As these workshops were undertaken during Covid restrictions, extra time was given to staff to prepare the workshop space, supervise entry and departure (including temperature checks), maintain social distancing and sanitise surfaces after use. During this period, members were also engaged via the Cotton Shed Facebook page to encourage attendance at these sessions.

The Company workshops - for those aged 16 and over - were based on reflecting member experiences within improvised short sketches where their disabilities had been misunderstood or they had felt excluded from society. The final goal of this mini-project was to turn these sketches into a short animation film that would make viewers think about the needs of others and promote inclusivity in Rossendale and beyond. This was completed by one of our Artistic staff (and part-time filmmaker) and published on the Cotton Shed Facebook page during the summer.

Unfortunately, the Artistic Leader for Workshops decided to leave in late May to pursue a new outward bounds venture. Consequently, the decision was made to not continue workshops during the summer term due to staff shortages. Due to these on-going staffing issues, together with Trustee changes, it was further decided to not resume workshops until a new board was established and a new staffing team could be formed.

Although the period that workshops could be run during 2021 was very short, those who attended received similar benefits as in the first two years of the National Lottery project. Indeed, after periods of isolation due to Covid, it offered members respite from isolation and enabled them to reform friendships and reinforce their social skills

Productions

Due to the continued disruption of the pandemic plus reorganization of staff resources, no major productions were possible during the year.

Community Activities

- **Silver Shed**

Silver Shed involves interactive theatre performances for people living with dementia, the elderly and their families and carers.

Silver Shed sessions ran successfully from April through to July 2021. Due to on-going Covid precautions, an innovative approach of undertaking performances safely outside was continued, with residents able to view and participate from inside. Twelve sessions were undertaken in total for the following care homes in Rossendale:

- Holme Manner
- Turfcote
- Ashlands
- Highfield Hall
- Lavender Hills

Pictures and feedback were posted on the Cotton Shed Facebook page to retain engagement and promote the Silver Shed project.

As key staff were unavailable in August and September due to personal reasons, it was planned to resume sessions in October. Unfortunately, it became apparent at the same time that the care homes were no longer able to accept visitors who had not been fully vaccinated due to their latest policies. Consequently, the sessions had to be discontinued for the remaining period.

• **Sign and Rhyme**

Sign and Rhyme is a weekly inclusive interactive performance for children aged 0-4 years and their parents/carers.

Sign and Rhyme sessions were reimagined and performed outside at various venues to align with Covid guidelines, regardless of the weather. With each session run by three leaders, approximately fifteen sessions were undertaken between April and July 2001 through a team of five staff before finishing for the summer holidays. Our separate Facebook page for Sign and Rhyme was actively updated during this period to help promote the sessions, co-ordinate dates/times and receive feedback.

Again, due to staff shortages, we were unable to restart these sessions in September 2001.

Feedback during the early part of 2021 indicated the warmth and positivity of our audiences to Sign and Rhyme and how it has helped form bonds between both young children and sets of parents during the pandemic. It also reaffirmed the demand within the community for this activity to return when Cotton Shed is again able to deliver.

• **Summer School**

Although our planned summer school – which extended workshop principles to provide activities for teenagers over the holiday period – was sold out, it had to be cancelled as insufficient staff could be found to safely run the sessions.

Financial Update

A statement of accounts for the year 2021 will be uploaded with this document. Three local schools, Haslingden High School, Tor View Specialist Community and Haslingden Primary School continued to partner with Cotton Shed by providing in-kind support, including office and workshop space, when in-person activities were possible.

Cotton Shed's main source of grant funding during 2021 was the National Lottery Community Fund that began in April 2019, with the third year of its original 3-year period commencing in April 2021. Regular discussions with the National Lottery, including the challenges of staffing caused by the pandemic and departures, has resulted in agreement that underspend can be carried forward to 2022 and 2023 to support the "reboot" of the charity while recruitment and restructuring is undertaken. The board wishes to thank the National Lottery for their continued flexibility and understanding.

Development of Board

In addition to retaining financial sustainability during the last twelve months, the priority was to develop a forward-looking board with diverse, relevant skills and experience in supporting the future direction of the charity. Taking advice from Trustees from other charities and reflecting on previous performance of Cotton Shed Boards, it was decided that a smaller number of pro-active volunteers would lead to more effective and responsive decision-making.

Internal training was undertaken early in 2021 based on the "The Essential Trustee" guide issued by The Charity Commission. This was followed by investing in awareness training by a HR consultant on various contract options when engaging staff and a network session with Trustees of Tram Shed, a similar charity operating in the Blackpool area, to share ideas and gather knowledge on how similar charities are run.

Combining new recruitment and re-affirmed commitment from existing Trustees, the board now consists of five members with a wide demographic spread: two with executive leadership skills within education representing the three founding schools, and three who are recent workshop members having benefited directly from previous Cotton Shed activities. Within this board, we also have representation with lived experience of disability.

With the support of Tram Shed, the board has begun the process of reviewing and improving Cotton Shed's policies, which will indirectly contribute to the learning and development of the Trustees.

Development of Staff

In addition to the core team of Artistic Director and Artistic Leader, four further staff were employed on a freelance basis part-time during early 2021 to help delivery, including two new contributors to Sign and Rhyme. Although their subsequent departures have been challenging, it is positive those who have since left the Charity have been able to grow and pursue new ventures at least partly through the skills and experience developed during their tenure. Our Artistic Leader, for example, has started her own organisation supporting families with outdoor activities. Two of our support staff have secured roles at a theatre within Greater Manchester. The board wishes our ex-colleagues the very best of luck in their new ventures.

Similarly, within the planned new team, one of our newly appointed Artistic Practitioners was previously a long-term workshop volunteer and fund-raiser for Cotton Shed. This is a great example of how Cotton Shed has helped develop our volunteers and introduce them into the arts industry as a profession.

Future Focus

The experiences of the pandemic and staff changes has reiterated the value and importance of Cotton Shed developing connections and partnerships with complementary organisations

Following initial contact during 2020, the relationship between Cotton Shed and Tram Shed has developed further during the last twelve months. This has included a joint Trustee meeting and placing a consulting contract with the Artistic Director of Tram Shed from January 2022 to support recruitment of new staff, improve our social media presence and review and strengthen our formal policies. This has resulted in the appointment of two new freelance Artistic Practitioners at the end of March 2022

We intend to continue this productive and supportive relationship during 2022, with our new staff receiving inclusivity training and initial work experience via Tram Shed. It has also been agreed to seek opportunities to share ideas, resources and freelance staff during the next year.

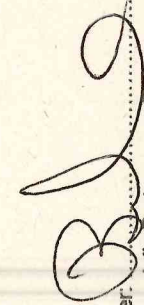
Starting March 2022, discussions have also begun between Cotton Shed and the Horse and Bamboo performing arts charity in Rossendale on forming a co-operation agreement. With both organisations active in East Lancashire, there is significant potential to pool resources and leverage our respective memberships and profiles within the shared community.

It is envisaged that with these new partnerships and the appointment of two new freelance Artistic Practitioners that Cotton Shed will resume workshops and community activities after the 2022 summer recess.

COTTONSHED ACCOUNTS
01 JANUARY - 31ST DECEMBER 2021

	EXPENDITURE	RECEIPTS
Balance Brought Forward		£ 108,706.70
correct with bank statement 31/12/2020		
1 Salaries	£ 18,251.13	
2 Accommodation, Travel, Subsistence & trips	£ 1,111.95	
3 Petty Cash	£ -	
4 Publicity	£ -	
5 Communication	£ 444.52	
6 Insurance	£ -	25.20
7 Subscriptions/Membership	£ -	2,598.02
8 Grants/Donations including Gift Aid & Virgin Money Giving	£ -	33,848.78
9 Summer School	£ -	728.26
10 Recruitment	£ 107.10	
11 Training	£ 372.00	
12 Production Costs	£ -	
13 Production Income	£ -	
14 Resources	£ 1,452.23	
15 Sign and Rhyme	£ 340.00	505.92
15a Sign and Rhyme Parties	£ -	
16 Misc	£ 50.00	441.11
17 Friendshed (Active Communities)	£ 477.18	
18 Near Neighbours	£ -	1,725.00
19 Silvershed	£ 836.00	
20 Cottonshed Room Hire	£ 728.00	
21 Shine Alive	£ -	
22 Audit of Accounts	£ 75.00	
23 Lotteries Registration	£ 20.00	
24 Company Connect	£ -	
25 COVID-19 Refunds	£ 120.00	
26 Sales	£ 43.20	
27 Songwriting Shed	£ 1,010.00	97.25
28 Company Animation Project	£ 224.00	
	£ 25,862.31	£ 148,676.24
		£ 123,013.93
		correct with bank statement p332


 Natalie McMahon Date 3/8/22

Treasurer: 
 Julie Burton Date 26/7/22
 Independent Examiner



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

COTTONSHED THEATRE COMPANY

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31/12/2021

**Charity no
(if any)**

1123037

Set out on pages

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

Date:

03/08/22

Name:

NATALIE McMAHON

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

N/A

Address:

14 HARLECH CLOSE, HASLINGDEN, ROSSENDALE BB4 6TL

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

COTTON SHED THEATRE COMPANY

England & Wales - Charity number 1123037

Accounts

Cotton Shed Trustees Report 2020



Chair of the Charity: Mr Keith Lofthouse
Secretary: Mrs Karen Taylor

Treasurer: Dr Brian Miller

Trustees:
Dr Brian Miller
Mr Keith Lofthouse

Board Members:

Mrs Karen Taylor
Miss Emma Hollis
Miss Emma Jones
Mrs Marcia Hollis
Mrs Karen Turner Riley
Mrs Gina Tomlinson
Mr Glyn Ellis
Mrs Cath Eddisford
Mr Corey Scott
Mr Matthew Eddisford
Miss Bethany Swarbrick

Co-opted members Mrs Cath Eddisford (Artistic Director)

Summary Report for the period year ending December 2019 (inclusive of Jan-April 2020)

Chair's Introduction

Cotton Shed Theatre Company has completed its thirteenth year of inclusive theatre workshops/sessions throughout East Lancashire. More projects, productions and developments have ensured we continue to grow and reach those who benefit most from the projects we run. We have continued to increase funds and attendance and the future continues to look bright.

2019/2020 has included the following key productions and projects.

- **Dust 2020.** This was destined to be Cotton Sheds biggest production to date due to be performed in March 2020. However, Covid-19 and lockdown meant the production could not go ahead and the performance has been put on hold to take place later in the year. Dust brings together 5 theatre groups made up of children, young people and adults of varying abilities. It has been devised and created by the members themselves and is about one boys journey into a magical land of pirates, fairies and adventure. The main focus is on greed, fear and chasing our dreams.
- **Silver Shed:** Silver Shed sessions have carried on to date with continued funding. The team have reached more care homes in the Rossendale valley and therefore more dementia patients and elderly residents have had access to interactive theatre sessions. As the sessions grow they continue to make a huge difference and have a positive impact on those who are lonely and isolated.
- **Friend Shed.** Friend Shed continues meetings on a Wednesday mornings (during Covid-19 this is taking place via Zoom online). Once we are out of lockdown the sessions will continue face to face at the

Garage café, which is part of Tor View Specialist Learning Community. Friend Shed continues to establish social links for anyone who may be isolated in the local community. It is also used for signposting people to other groups to expand their socialising and supportive links.

- **Sign and Rhyme:** The sessions aimed at 0-4 years continues to grow in popularity, maintaining three sessions weekly. Sign and Rhyme continues to develop links with various establishments and sessions have taken place at schools, nurseries and the renowned puppet theatre 'The Boo' in Waterfoot. Online videos have ensured young children can still access sessions during the Covid-19. Sign and Rhyme is led by three members of the artistic team and continues to offer opportunities for volunteers, some of who have additional needs or disabilities.
- **Summer School:** Cotton Sheds Summer School for 5-11 years was more successful than ever in 2019 with more accessing the sessions than ever before. We plan to hold two weeks worth of workshops in summer 2020 due to popular demand. The sessions are inclusive and aimed every year for both mainstream children and children with additional needs and/or a disability.
- **Significant developments**
Cotton Shed currently runs the following weekly workshops
Sign and Rhyme (0 - 4 years) (3 sessions)
 Beginners (4-7 years)
Children's (8-11 years) (2 sessions)
Youth Theatre (12-15 years)
Company (16+ years)
Silver Shed (2-3 sessions)
Friend Shed

We recruited a new administrator in 2019 who is a welcomed addition to the team. We have secured funding for a dance practitioner, which we will recruit for as soon as we return to regular activities after lockdown.

Thank you to all the staff, members, volunteers, parents and carers and our ever-growing audience. Your support is paramount to our charity.

Financial Update

A statement of accounts for the year 2019 is attached. Three local schools. Haslingden High School, Tor View Specialist Community and Haslingden Primary School continue to support Cotton Shed by providing in kind support. Provision of office space, theatre space for performances, rehearsal space is some of the support these three establishments give to our charity.

Cotton Sheds main source of financial support during 2019 has been from grants, donations and productions. Successful grant applications are crucial in ensuring Cotton Shed continue to grow and develop and offer the inclusive services that are much needed in our locality.

Future Focus

Financial sustainability will remain key. Successful grant applications, a strong artistic team and supportive board alongside parents and carers place us in a very optimistic position for the future.

Cotton Shed Trustees Report 2021



Acting Chair of the Charity: Louise Parrish

Treasurer: Brian Miller

Trustees:
Lewis Gallagher
Glyn Ellis

Summary Report for the period April 2020 - March 2021.

Acting Chair's Introduction

Cotton Shed Theatre Company has completed its fourteenth year of inclusive theatre workshops/sessions throughout East Lancashire.

Like many charities, Cotton Shed has had a challenging time since the Covid-19 pandemic began in March 2020. Our artistic team had to rethink the way in which they worked, the projects they ran, always ensuring that our members are still at the heart of everything we do. The last year taught us all that community spirit is needed more than ever. Inclusion is paramount to create a brighter future for all and that projects such as The Shed must continue to reach the people who need it the most.

We were proud that Cotton Shed received a Rossendale Business Award for Accessible Business and also reached the final for Business of the Year. It was fantastic to be nominated by the community and recognised for the work done.

The board wishes to thank the artistic team for all their hard work and creatively during the past 12 months in maintaining Cotton Shed delivery during an unprecedented time for the whole community. Although we have many challenges ahead, we are confident and committed to reshaping the charity for the future based on our recent experiences.

Workshop Activities

Performance workshops delivered via weekly sessions bring together people from various backgrounds with varying abilities. These sessions seek to breakdown social barriers and give everyone the opportunity to be creative and create outstanding theatre.

During 2020, Cotton Shed endeavored to continue provision for the following age groups.

- Beginners (4-7 years)
- Children's (8-11 years)
- Youth Theatre (12-15 years)
- Company (16+ years)

Workshops were moved online following the start of the pandemic, in accordance with government guidance. These sessions were more focused on maintaining social contact between members and running game-based activities.

However, a focus on performance was maintained by an initiative of creating dedicated regular videos, with members participating by emailing in short performances filmed via their personal phones which were then edited and compiled by the artistic team. Through this project work, a total of 18 online videos were created.

During a temporary opening up of restrictions following the summer holiday period, Cotton Shed experimented with socially-distanced "in person" sessions for the Company group, running 6 workshops accordingly. These sessions were then halted again as the second lockdown approached, returning to online provision

In total, 54 online workshops were delivered.

Productions

As reported last year, "Dust" was destined to be Cotton Shed's biggest production to date, due to be performed in March 2020. However, Covid-19 and lockdown meant the production could not go ahead.

Although the original intention was run the production later during the year, the unforeseen continuation of the pandemic meant that too much time elapsed to restart the show with many of the original members. Consequently, a practical decision was made to create any new productions from the beginning, engaging the creativity of future new members.

Community Activities

- **Silver Shed**

Silver Shed involves interactive theatre performances for people living with dementia, the elderly and their families and carers.

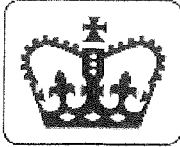
During the pandemic, the safety of residents was of the utmost concern. Consequently, to avoid any risk of transmission, sessions were performed outside care home buildings, enabling residents to watch the sessions through windows. During this period, 9 care homes in the Rossendale area were visited, delivering a total of 55 performances.

Furthermore, an album of songs was specially recorded which was delivered to 25 care homes, together with videos of performances made available on Cotton Shed's Facebook page.

- **Friend Shed**

Friend Shed is focused on establishing social links for anyone who may be isolated in the local community. It is also used for signposting people to other groups to expand their socialising and supportive links. When in person, Friend Shed primarily involved members meeting on Wednesday mornings at the Garage café, which is part of Tor View Specialist Learning Community.

Friend Shed had to move to online meetings during the lockdown and restrictions, covering a broad range of themes within the Zoom sessions. These were topics which the steering group and public had suggested and included



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of

COTTONSHED THEATRE COMPANY

On accounts for the year ended

31/12/2020

Charity no (if any)

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Set out on pages

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* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Natalie McMahon

Date:

08/06/2021

Name:

NATALIE McMAHON

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

N/A

Address:

14 Harlech Close, Haslingden, Rossendale, Lancs, BB46 7L

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

