



# PHOENIX THEATRE BLYTH TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23



**Charity Number: 1149700**

**Company Number: 08113214**

# FOREWORD

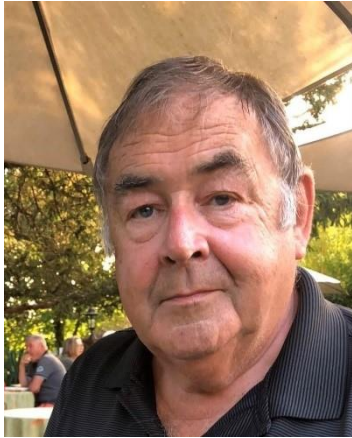
The Trustees of the Phoenix Theatre Blyth are pleased to present their annual report for the year ending 31 March 2022, which is also prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies House purposes.

The Financial accounts (which have been submitted separately to this document) comply with the Charities Act 1993, the Companies Act 1985, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting Charities (SORP 2005).

The Phoenix Theatre (Blyth) is owned by an incorporated charitable trust and managed by a Board of Directors.



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE



I have the greatest pleasure in welcoming you to this Annual Report for the Phoenix Theatre, Blyth.

It has been a period, not without challenge, continuing to re-establish the business after the pandemic and finding our niche in a constantly broadening environment. Nevertheless, I am pleased to report a healthy grasp of the challenges that these change have made.

We continue to work on our 'reach-out' and community development programmes, as well as improving the main theatre offer. Professional theatre personnel have been engaged to train our children and youth theatre ranks, focusing on theatre as a whole and not solely preparation for an in-house performance.

Alongside striving to offer better and better theatre options, and again, not without its own challenges, cinema was introduced early in the year and even though its start was slow, it continues to complement our theatre offer and helps diversify our potential audience reach. The greatest challenge we face, however, is from the imminent opening of a small, three screen cinema, built and operated by the local authority, even though the local council granted our organisation money to purchase equipment to set up the theatre in the beginning.

That aside, however, (and it does pose a threat to our business as the new centre also incorporates live performance space), we have had a most satisfactory year, showing expansion and improvement statistics in all aspects of our operation. Audience demography is most interesting, knowledge and support of our activities now attracts a much wider range of locations, both regionally and nationally.

Our forthcoming plans are to grow the present programmes, extending our operation based within a solid base of community interest and support. One of our greatest assets in this respect has been the appointment of a new theatre manager, experienced in professional entertainment.

We continue to thrive and make progress in these challenging times, especially considering the ever-rising cost of living and associated requirements. These details are fully represented in the body of this report which I, unhesitatingly, commend to you.

David G Garrett  
Chief Executive – Phoenix Theatre (Blyth)

## A LOOK BACK AT THE YEAR 2022/23

In our last annual report, we reflected on the Phoenix's return from the horror that was Covid and the resultant 18 month closure that threatened to close our doors. We talked of optimism, of return, regrowth, renewal and resilience – words which amply describe how 2022/23 panned out. Another successful year for the theatre – a year of growth and expansion, innovation and new directions, in which we reached out to even more audiences, reinforcing our pledge to be South-East Northumberland's premier entertainment venue. Our reservations that our audiences might not return after Covid were quashed, as we welcomed back long-term customers and entertained hundreds of new.

We started the year with a bang, as our long-term ambitions to bring Cinema back to Blyth finally came to fruition. The state-of-the-art screen, which fills the entire width of the stage, together with the exceptional sound, produces a top quality cinematic experience and throughout the year we have shown 51 different films, totaling 174 screenings and welcomed 4085 customers with a net take of just over £21k. It is true to say that it hasn't been the easiest of launches and there have been many challenges along the way (see our Cinema review later in this report), but we are confident that we can continue to sustain cinema at the Phoenix Theatre in years to come.

Our theatre programme has been varied and we have kept our promise to bring new and diverse entertainment, which hopefully has satisfied the needs of our new and returning customers. During the year we hosted music from 43 different bands offering very different genres of music, from heavy rock to folk to country and western to soul and old classics and we were thrilled to be able to welcome top names such as The Quireboys, Brian Downey, The Christians, The Real Thing, as well as the return of favourites, such as Joe McElderry and Blake.

On the variety front, we catered for aficionados of other types of entertainment, such as LDN Wrestling, Tony Stockwell (medium), adult panto and Silver Bells and in October, our auditorium was filled with ardent sports fans, who enjoyed an evening with snooker greats, Dennis Taylor, Steve Davis and John Virgo. Another memorable capacity-filled evening was experienced in February with the cast of the fabulous musical *Come What May*, based on the film *Moulin Rouge*, starring Strictly's Robin Windsor. We also continued to provide a venue for our two local Blyth operatic societies, Beaconsfield Operatic and Blyth Music & Theatre Company, as we supported them in their annual musical productions.

Although our drama/play offer has been limited this year, audiences have been highly complimentary, particularly of our in-house production of *Cooking with Elvis*, back for the sixth time in July. Still bringing in the audiences, this play must rank as one of the most asked for productions! We also welcomed a small-scale production of *Doing Shakespeare*, starring Steven Arnold, of Coronation Street fame, which played to a capacity audience in the Studio to a very appreciative audience. We are looking to bring more of this type of drama to the theatre in the coming months.

Dance played a significant part in our theatre calendar this year. Not only did we host six local amateur dance companies as they performed their annual shows, we welcomed two ballet companies, Crown Ballet and Ballet UK, who performed quality productions of *Sleeping Beauty*, *Nutcracker* and *Beauty and the Beast*.



And finally, our round-up of our theatre programme would not be complete without a mention of our annual in-house pantomime. This year's offering was *Jack and the Beanstalk*, which played to capacity audiences for 12 performances over one week, accruing gross sales totals of nearly £45k. Our pantomime is our biggest source of income throughout the year and involves input from everyone – a sterling effort, which we need to carry forward to next year!

One of the objectives listed in last year's report was to look for opportunities to engage further with the community and to build on daytime usage and it is fair to say that, under the auspices of our Theatre Manager, Kyle Crook, we have made some advances in this area. Further details are included later in this report, but we can report that not only have we engaged with a few local groups and partners and hosted a couple of events, such as the premier of the short film '*Close Knit*' and the Northumberland Pride event in September, but have also laid the stepping stones for the introduction of a number of new community-led groups. (At the time of writing, these groups have already commenced in 2023 and will be reported on in the next annual report).

Another objective from last year was to review our provision for young people, specifically to include an element of learning and education, and we are pleased to report that, during this year, we have started this process. In August, we hosted a week long young people's theatre summer school, led by local theatre professional, Harriet O'Brien. During the week, 30 young people underwent a fun, but intensive, schedule of song, dance and drama, culminating in a final day's performance to family and friends. Overall, the summer school was received very favourably by all who attended and the parents were particularly appreciative and complimentary. It is now our intention to build upon the success of the week and look towards repeating the summer school in 2023. We are grateful to the Ridley Trust, who have donated monies to enable us to fund a programme of free monthly theatre skills workshops and we have also secured the license to perform *Frozen Junior* in November 2023.

The building remains a continual source of concern, as we lurch from year to year wondering if the roof will survive or the heating will fail us. To date, both are still functioning, although we have had some problems with water ingress, which requires minor repair. We are currently looking at potential heating system replacements, particularly with a view to reducing costs and improving our carbon footprint. One of our major improvements this year has been the installation of new external advertising banners, which have given us a more visual presence in Beaconsfield Street, plus our new external LED noticeboard. This latter addition has provided us with the facility to communicate with customers and advertise shows in a more timely manner, negating the need to regularly install physical notices, which go out of date.

Regarding our team, we have had some small changes with the resignation of our box office assistant, Alison Leddy, and one of our trustees, Claire Khass. We thank them for their input over the past few years and wish them both well in their future ventures. Alison's post has been taken over by Tracy Crook, who started her new role in February 2023 and we were thrilled to welcome back David McSparron as a new Trustee in April.

All in all, 2022/23 has been another very successful year, not just financially but artistically with the promise of many exciting developments to come. This could not have been achieved without the stalwart input of the whole team – staff, volunteers and trustees – together with the support of our customers, corporate sponsors and funders. We look optimistically to another great year for the Phoenix Theatre.

# THEATRE PROGRAMME

During this year, we presented **66** different shows over **94** performances covering 7 genre types i.e. tributes, headliners, variety, dance, musicals, pantomimes and plays. These were enjoyed by almost **20.5k** customers (40.2% increase from last year) and accounted for over **£35k** gross sales.

## TRIBUTE ACTS

Ultimate Boy Band  
We are Champion  
Cloudbusting  
Pop Princesses  
Blue Flamingoes  
Totally Tina  
10CCLO  
Bon Jovi Forever  
Billy Joel – Keeping the Faith  
Fleeting Rumours  
Beatlemania  
UK Rock Show  
Creedence Clearwater Revival  
Ultimate Bowie  
Counterfeit 60s  
Absolute Elvis  
Let the Music Play  
Jukebox & Bobbysox  
Blues Brothers  
Best of Queen  
Foreigner Journey  
Lipstick on Your Collar  
The Rat Pack  
Take That Experience  
Women in Rock  
Navi – King of Pop  
Retro Rock  
Ultimate 70s  
Ben Thompson as Elvis  
Typically Tina  
Come What May  
Glenn Miller tribute  
Abba Forever  
T-rextasy  
Twist and Shout  
Big Country Show

## HEADLINERS

The Christians  
Brian Downey  
The Quireboys  
The Real Thing  
Blake  
Joe McElderry

## BALLET

Sleeping Beauty  
The Nutcracker  
Beauty and the Beast

## DANCE SHOWS

Stephanie Morgan  
Dance Stars  
Timestep  
Michelle Dance  
Strut  
Fusion Dance

## PLAYS

Grimm Tales  
Cooking with Elvis  
Doing Shakespeare

## PANTOMIME

Jack and the Beanstalk

## MUSICALS

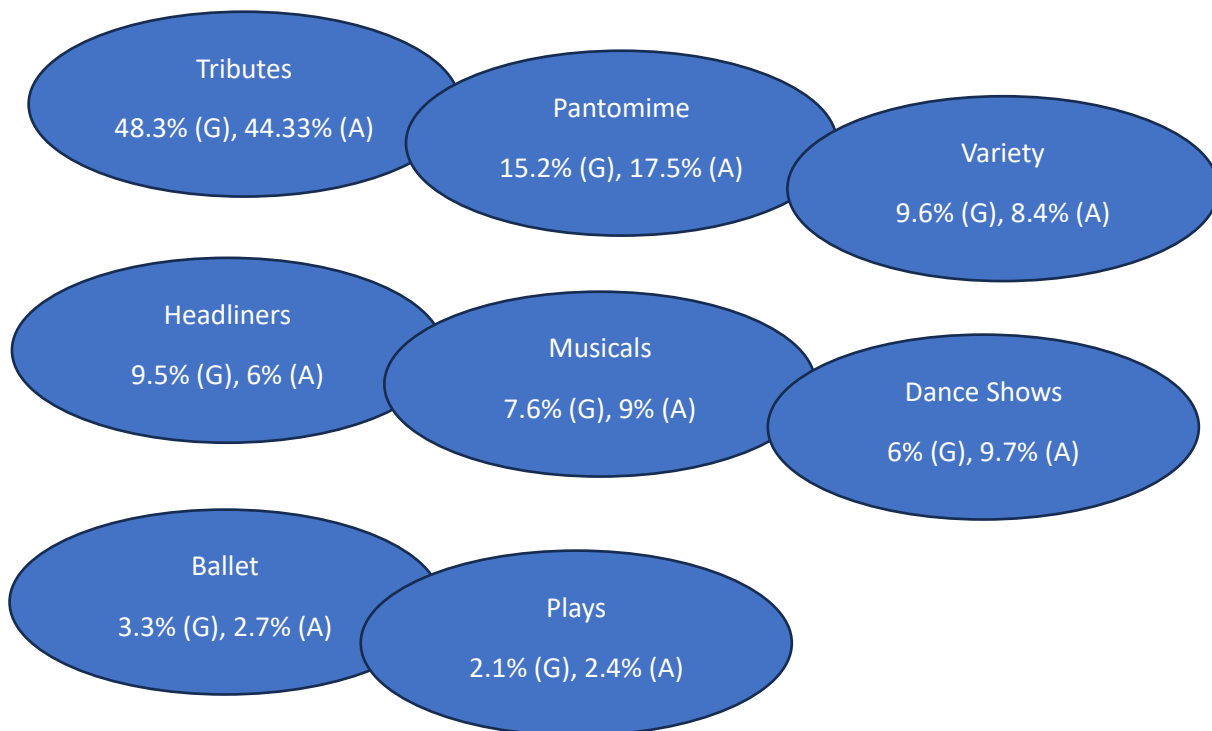
Elf the Musical  
Our House

## VARIETY

LDN Wrestling  
Sleeping with Beauty  
Tony Stockwell (Medium)  
Snooker Greats  
Cracking Halloween  
Punch Drunk  
Silver Bells  
Festive Dickens  
High Jinx

We acknowledge that tribute bands do make up over 50% of the entertainment within the programme, but the range and diversity of the acts contributes to the total content variety. Given the predominance of these types of acts within the programme, it is not surprising that they accounted for the highest gross

sales and attendances throughout the year, but it is interesting to look at the breakdown over the different performance genres. The following diagram shows the percentage split by genre (G – Gross sales, A – Attendances)



Compared with last year's breakdown, there has been a decrease in both musicals and plays, mainly due to the fact that we didn't produce an in-house production this year, but there has been a significant increase in dance. This is due to the inclusion of two ballet companies within the programme and also a 50% uptake in local dance groups hiring the venue. The other genres remain consistent with previous years.

Of the 66 different shows, 70% were split deals and 22% were hires (mostly taken up by local amateur organisations, such as operatic societies and dance schools). 4.5% were fees – these were for named artistes – and in-house productions accounted for the remainder.

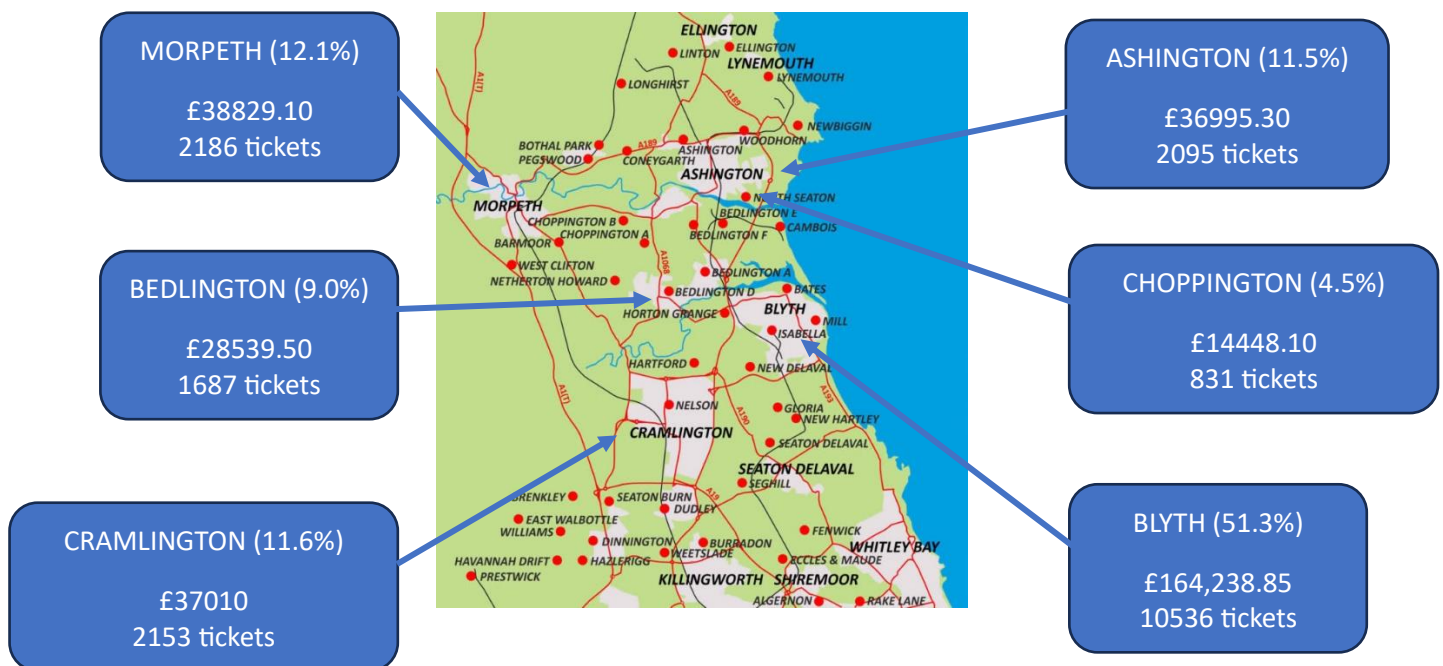
## TICKET SALES AND AUDIENCES

During this year, there was a total of **£424,948** in gross ticket sales – a 34.8% increase from last year – which accounted for **26,551** tickets. These figures far surpass our pre-Covid totals and dispel our concerns that audiences would not return.

It is always interesting to ascertain where our audiences come from as this enables us to not only feel we are meeting the needs of our local community, but also assists with marketing strategies aimed at attracting audiences from further afield. Postcode analysis from our Ticketsolve booking system is a vital source of information, which enables us to breakdown our ticket sales. Unfortunately 2.7% of our records for this year have unknown postcodes, accounting for £11578 of sales, but we can still extrapolate interesting analysis from the remaining records. These reveal that **75.6%** of our gross ticket sales were bought by customers living in South East Northumberland (accounting for £320,060.85) with **51.31%** living in Blyth (£164,238.85)

### SOUTH-EAST NORTHUMBERLAND BREAKDOWN (75.6% of sales)

This year's sales figures within South-East Northumberland are comparative with last year's, but there has been a 2% increase of sales from customers living in both Blyth and Morpeth





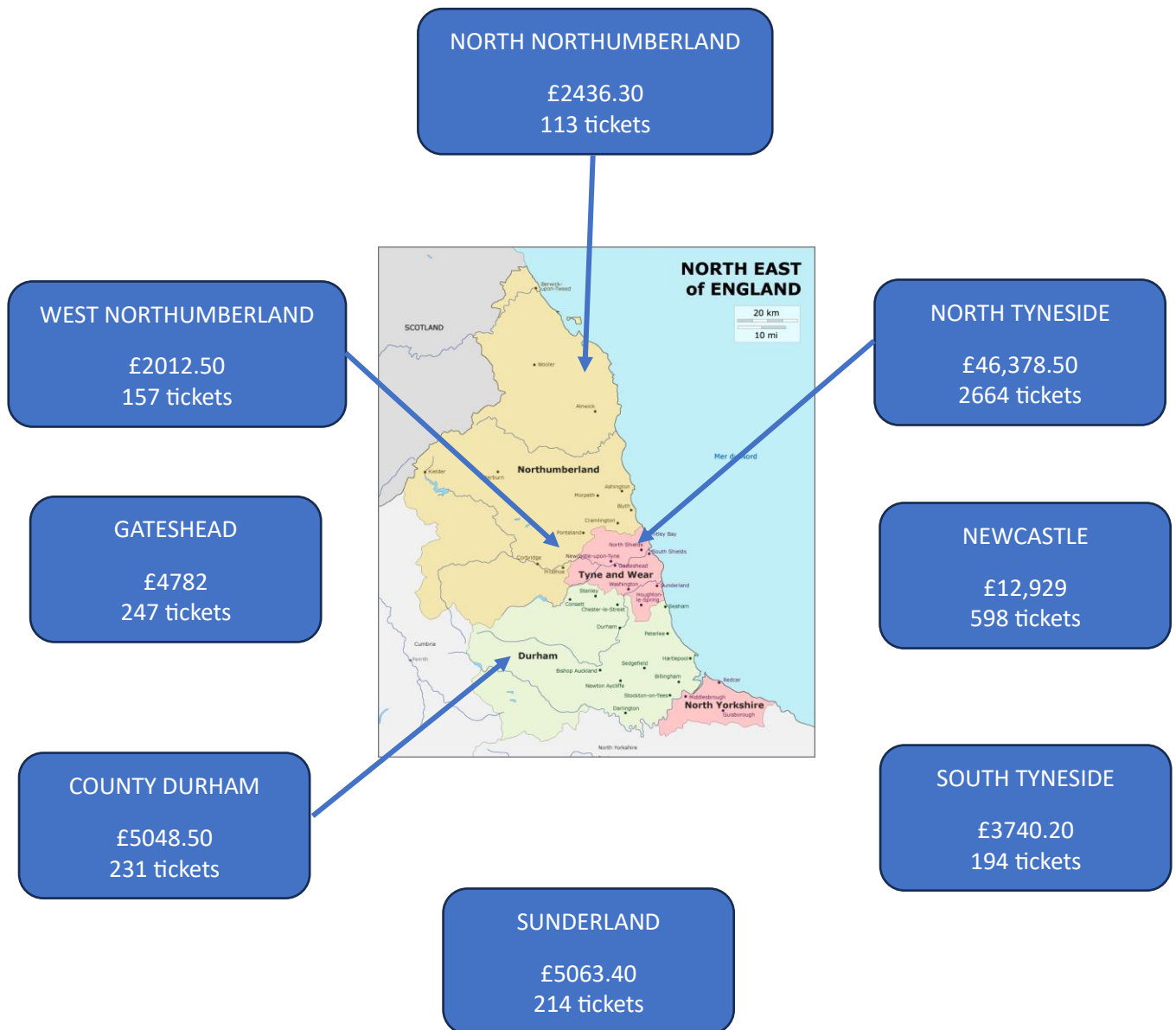
## BLYTH WARD BREAKDOWN

The following diagram shows the breakdown of gross annual sales by customers living within Blyth. Figures are comparative with last year's i.e. Wensleydale ward having most sales and Isabella and Cowpen having least sales. However there has been a significant increase of sales within Plessey ward this year, jumping from fourth to second place.



Although the above figures demonstrate no particular surprise to us – (there is an expectation that the majority of customers would live within South-East Northumberland and specifically Blyth) - it is interesting to see how the remaining 21.7% of sales are spread across the rest of the northern region, not to mention the rest of the country.

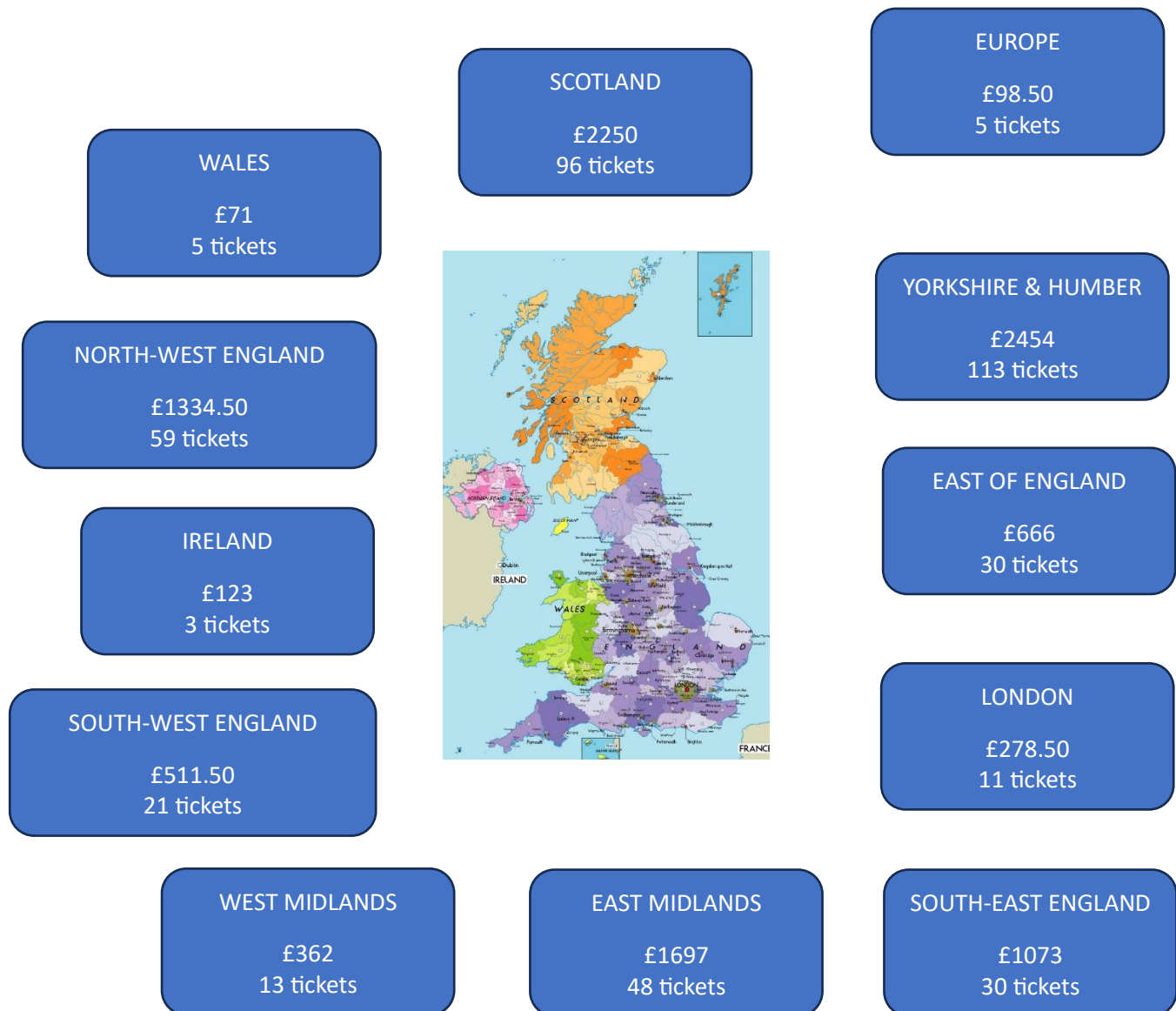
## NORTH-EAST REGION BREAKDOWN



As can be seen from the above breakdown, a significant amount of sales have been generated from customers living within North Tyneside, making it the second highest sales generator behind Blyth.

## REST OF THE COUNTRY BREAKDOWN

It always surprises us the distances our audiences travel to see our shows. Whether it's because they're on holiday in the area, visiting family or following a particular favourite act of theirs, but whatever the reason, we welcome them all from all corners of the country and beyond (as you can see from the map below)!



## Purchasing patterns

Last year we reported a 15% increase in online customers and stated that this appeared to be the direction of travel with 75% opting to book online and only 25% using the services of the box office. This year's analysis shows, however, that there has actually been a slight decrease in online usage and that 29.8% of customers opted to utilise the box office. Of those who did, 71% attended in person and 29% booked over the phone. At this point in

time, we are unable to ascertain the reasons for this slight shift, but we shall be monitoring over the next year.

Last year we also reported on the decrease in postage costs, as more customers opted to print or download their own tickets at home and statistics show that this trend has continued this year with only 201 customers opting for tickets to be posted, amounting to £301.50. Owing to this decrease, we made the decision to remove the postage option from the booking system, which means that customers are now only able to collect physical tickets from the theatre or download e-tickets themselves – the latter method being the preferred one used by about 80% of our customers.

Another interesting trend is the decline in cash payments – a trend which seems to be exhibited nationwide. During this year, only 5.78% opted to pay for their tickets with cash with 92.2% utilizing debit or credit cards. Cheque payments are minimal these days (0.53%) and are restricted to block booking customers, such as guide and scout parties. We have also seen a small increase in customers using bank transfers – again these are for large block bookings.

Phoenix Theatre vouchers are still proving to be popular and this year we sold 107 vouchers, totalling £2170. Vouchers accounted for 1.04% of the payment type for this year as we saw £4749 being redeemed for ticket sales.

## **Marketing and Advertising**

Although we advertise on our website, we still find that a number of our customers prefer having a physical brochure, which we produce twice a year and mail out to just over 2500 addresses. Copies are also available at the theatre as well as a number of public venues in the area, such as libraries and hotels. The new external LED screen has proved to be popular and a useful source of advertising, but, as with previous years, our most effective method of advertising is on social media, in particular Facebook, which generates most impact.

## CINEMA

The introduction of cinema at the Phoenix Theatre has been the most anticipated and long-awaited addition to our entertainment portfolio for a number of years. Following the closure of the Wallaw cinema in 2004, there have been numerous public calls to bring back cinema to Blyth. We did attempt to trial it in 2014/15, utilising a temporary screen and hired films/equipment, but it didn't quite work for us at that time.

However, after major advancements in technology and donations from benevolent funders, we were able to purchase a state-of-the-art screen and equipment, together with working with a company to source and provide films digitally, our launch finally came to fruition on 18 April 2022.

We opened with a showing of the popular animated film *Sing 2* at 12.00 pm, followed by 2 showings of *The Duke*, welcoming 55 customers over the day, who were very complimentary about the quality and facilities. Since the launch, we have had 174 screenings during this year seen by **4085** visitors, accounting for **£20,319.42**. It is fair to say that cinema has brought us a new audience, many of whom have returned to see other theatre shows.

Introducing cinema hasn't been without major challenges and it is fair to say that, throughout the year, we have debated whether we made a wise decision. Owing to the fact that we cannot show films every day (due to our other theatre commitments), precludes us from securing the rights to show films as they are newly released. This means that ardent film fans will probably have already seen the film by the time we show it. We also found that expenditure was starting to exceed our income, as we had to pay for the services of the film distribution company, together with film transport costs. Together with this we also face the threat posed by the planned building of a cinema in Blyth marketplace.

However, we have faced these challenges head on and have looked at ways in which we can still show films and build up a cinema audience without the risk of losing too much financially. Firstly, we have opted to independently source films ourselves, liaising directly with distributors, such as Disney and Warner Brothers, who provide the films digitally, via email. We have also changed the way we programme our films throughout the year, using a four-stream approach i.e. our films fall into four different categories:

- Mainstream newly released films
- Live streaming (plays and concerts)
- Saturday morning/school holiday events for young people
- Special event screenings, such as Christmas, Valentines Day and Mothers' Day, which may include additions, such as afternoon tea.

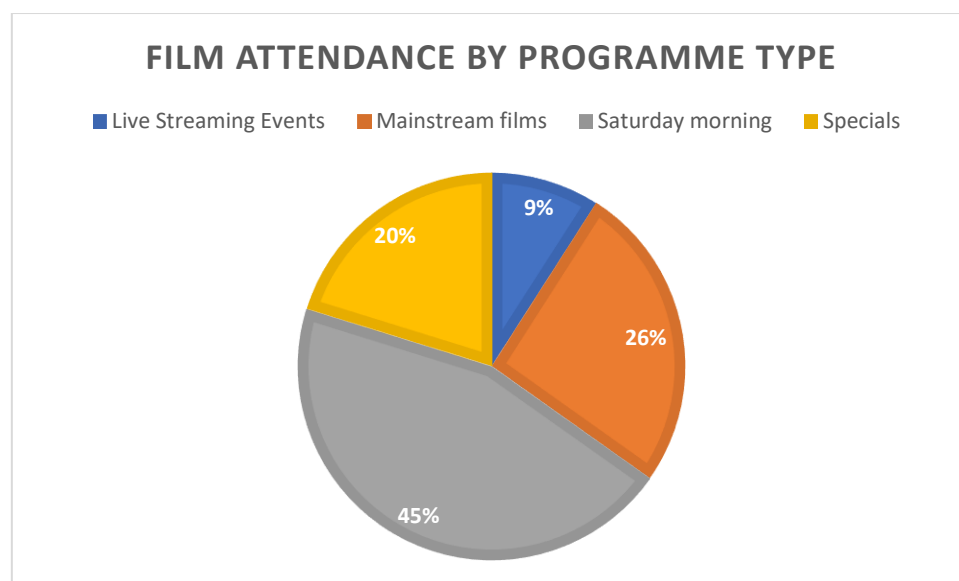
The most popular mainstream films attended this year were *Elvis – the Movie* (189 attended), *Top Gun* (157 attended), and *Downton Abbey* (97 attended). Live streaming concerts, such as Westlife and Andre Rieu have also attracted large numbers, but National Theatre streamed plays have a smaller and more niche audience - although 60 people did attend a screening of Jodie Comer's excellent one-woman presentation of *Prima Facie*.



The majority of attendances, however, are for films aimed at young people and we are particularly grateful to be working with Leading Link, who regularly provide us with large groups during school holidays, as part of their activities programmes. The highest attended children's film was *Matilda-the Musical*, which played to over 600 people in January.

Our special event film offers have also proven to be very popular, particularly over the Christmas period, when we screened a number of well-loved films, such as *White Christmas* and *Miracle on 34<sup>th</sup> Street*, followed by a festive tea. The surprise event of the year, however, was our Christmas Eve showing of *Polar Express*, which included hot chocolate and photo opportunities with a Tom Hanks conductor look-alike. So popular was the event that it sold out within one day of being put on sale, causing us to advertise another screening in the morning, which was also a sell-out.

The following chart shows the breakdown of attendances by the different programme type:



As with our regular theatre programme, it is interesting to gauge where our cinema audiences are coming from, particularly given that we have other cinema provision nearby, e.g. Cramlington and Whitley Bay. Unfortunately, we don't have as robust data for cinema audiences as we do for theatre audiences, due to the fact that 40% of the tickets were acquired as block reservations by organisations, such as Leading Link, therefore we don't have full customer details.

However, analysis of the cinema attendances that we do have data for, shows that 73.1% of customers live in Blyth with 4.8% from Bedlington and 4.6% from Ashington. On an interesting note, data also shows that 6% of attendees live in Cramlington and 3.6% live in Whitley Bay.

We shall continue to monitor cinema sales and attendances very closely over the coming months and look for other opportunities to utilise the facilities.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In line with our mission statement, we are committed to working with local organisations and groups, to engage with the community and provide a venue for them to showcase their work and interact with people of similar interests. During this year, we have been proactive in liaising with a number of groups and organisations, fostering new working relationships.

One exciting project, led by Museums Northumberland Bait, utilised our cinema facility in May, as we hosted the premiere of *"Close Knit"*, an animated film documentary about life in South-East Northumberland. Taking inspiration from the TV programme, *Creature Comforts*, the film featured a range of interviews from local people, who voiced their own words, but were represented on film by handmade animations. The event was attended by almost 200 people, including representation from the local Syrian community.

In July we welcomed back Cramlington Village Primary School, who staged their end of year celebrations in the auditorium, then in August we were one of four venues in Blyth to host the *"extra(ordinary)"* exhibition, which was coordinated by Northumberland County Council. This was a national touring exhibition of photographs, taken in hundreds of locations across the UK – each photograph representing the unusual and surreal reality of everyday life.

As previously mentioned, August saw the return of the young people's group to the Phoenix, as we embarked on a week-long theatre summer school, focusing on musical theatre and culminating in an hour long showcase on the final afternoon. So popular was this event, that it sold out within a couple of days of being advertised and had a waiting list. In the coming months, we want to focus on developing more activities for young people, specifically involving learning and encompassing all areas of theatre e.g. music, dance, drama and technical and will include more workshops and performance. We are proactively looking for theatre professionals who can assist in this development.

As to daytime usage, we are currently drawing up a programme of scheduled activities, including a creative writing course, a singing group for persons with dementia and/or learning disabilities, a seated exercise group and Little Movers/Baby Movers, which are pre-school dance and movement groups. All of these initiatives will be launched in 2023.

## OBITUARIES

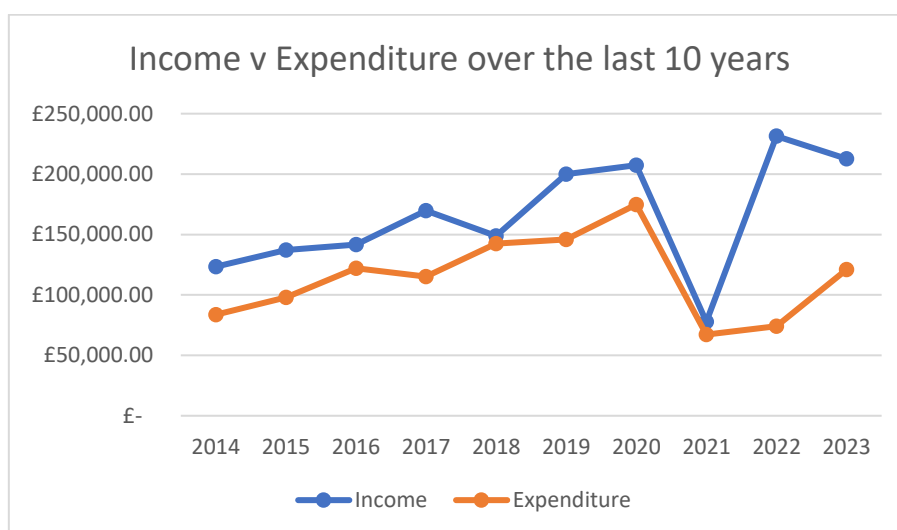
We are saddened to report the deaths of 3 people, who have contributed to the Phoenix Theatre over the years. Jeanette Roper, who steadfastly worked on the box office for over a decade, as well as acting as registrar for our in-house productions. Wendy Jackson, a former committee member who was active during the fund-raising years and who, prior to Covid lockdown was instrumental in organizing our Saturday coffee mornings. Bill Gilbert, husband of our former trustee and secretary Pauleen, who, as musical director for Beaconsfield Operatic Society, utilised the theatre's facilities during the 1980s.

Our condolences and thoughts have been sent to their families.

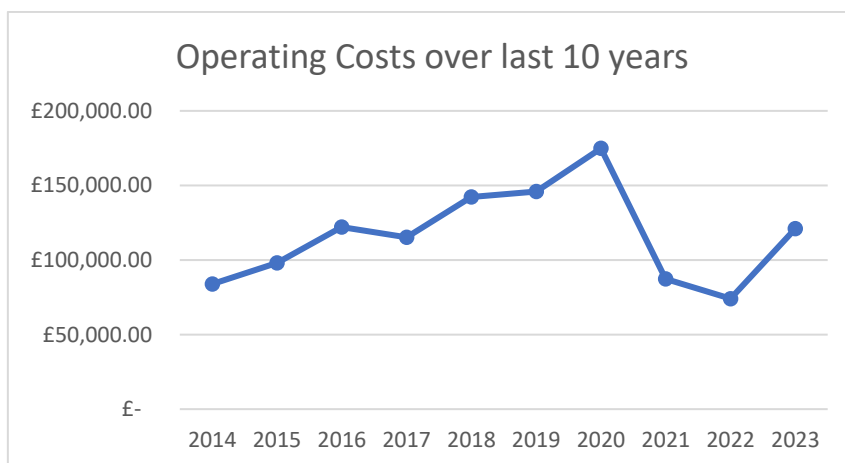
## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Despite the repercussions still being felt after Covid lockdown and the threats posed by the national economy, the Phoenix Theatre has experienced a surprisingly successful financial year, which far surpasses our expectations. Pre-sales on box office are very optimistic and we have a plans in the pipeline which we are hopeful will bolster the coffers even further.

We know, however, that we cannot afford to sit on our laurels and we must continue to err on the side of caution. Foremost in our mind are the ever-increasing utility costs and we are closely monitoring monthly expenditure, particularly for gas and electricity and looking at every opportunity to reduce costs. As the following chart indicates, our income and expenditure have tended to work in parallel and, although we haven't quite reached the pre-Covid levels of out-going costs, they are on the upturn and we anticipate an even greater increase in the next couple of years.



These trends are also mirrored in our overall theatre operating costs, as can be seen from the following chart:



During this year, we have also embarked on a comprehensive review of our VAT procedures, which potentially may have huge financial implications. It has come to our attention that we, as a charitable organization managed by volunteers, may qualify for exemption from VAT for all ticket sales and expenditure. We have engaged the services of a qualified VAT consultant to carry out an independent review and we are hopeful that this will benefit us advantageously. (Further details in next annual report)

## **Funding and Donations**

We are continually grateful for the financial support we received from funding, grants and donations and would like to express thanks to Northumberland County Council who have honoured their annual grant funding of £40,829. It is likely that, due to the economic climate, this will be reduced next year, but we are thankful that NCC continue to support us.

We are also grateful to the Ridley Trust who bequeathed us a grant of £5000, which has been ring-fenced specifically for activities involving the Young Phoenix. We intend utilising these monies to fund our planned workshops and production in 2023, as well as other educational events. The Young Phoenix also benefited from a donation from Blyth Rotary, which went towards the Summer School.

Our thanks would not be complete without reference to the generosity of our customers, who continue to regularly donate to our Theatre Development Fund. During this year, we can report a 17.4% increase in donations from last year with a total of £1386 raised from 881 individuals – this total then generates further income, as 77% of donators have signed up to Gift Aid, meaning that we can claim a further 25%.



## Looking forward to 2023/24

It is probably true to say that we have now just about weathered the storms created by Covid and are back on track and looking ahead to another year at the Phoenix Theatre. We admit that some of our intended projects have not yet come to fruition, but this is understandable, given the nature of the environment and the curved balls that are often thrown in our way. We are optimistic, however, that we can consolidate during this coming year and introduce new and exciting projects.

### **To-do list (not exhaustive, but an indication of the year ahead)**

- Our theatre programme is currently fully scheduled with a huge variety of new and diverse entertainment, including names such as Francis Rossi, Paul Young and Jeff Stelling, but we now need to look further ahead towards 2024/25
- We want to build upon the work started this year, specifically targeting school holidays to provide entertainment specifically for young people, both live theatre and cinema
- We need to continue to review our cinema provision, always mindful of the potential threat created by the building of the new cinema in Blyth marketplace
- We want to continue to develop plans to increase daytime usage, particularly the launch of the new groups, namely the creative writing, singing group, baby/little movers and the seated dance class.
- We shall continue to monitor our technical support contracts to ensure seamless and professional quality in lighting and sound for all of our productions and events
- We need to review our volunteer provision and roles, particularly bar and front of house
- We need to continue to review our Board membership and develop sustainability plans
- We need to continue to build relationships with local partners and organisations to ensure that we have representation and a voice in planning and decision making, relating to arts in the area
- We need to continue to closely monitor energy costs and complete the replacement of all lighting with LED equivalent
- We need to actively explore funding sources relating to the replacement of our heating system
- We need to act upon the recommendations of the external VAT review which will potentially establish us as a culturally exempt organisation

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In conclusion, as we bring this annual report to a close, we must acknowledge the contribution and support from everyone involved with the Phoenix Theatre - our hard-working staff, volunteers, trustees and freelance personnel, our customers, together with the businesses and organisations who work with us. Thank you!



## Appendices

### STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

*In the next couple of pages we present details of this organisation's formal structure, how we are administrated and by whom and information relating to our underpinning governance*

#### REFERENCE & ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

Company Registration Number: 08113214  
Charity Registration Number: 1149700  
VAT Registration Number: 804 2178 55

The directors of the charitable company (the charity) are its trustees for the purposes of charity law. The trustees serving during this year and since the year end are as follows:

David Garrett (Chair)  
Paul Worth  
Alison Thoburn  
Robert Nixon  
Claire Khass (resigned January 2023)

#### REGISTERED OFFICE:

The Phoenix Theatre, 37a Beaconsfield Street, BLYTH, NE24 3DS

#### SOLICITORS:

Dickinson Dees, St Annes Wharf, 112 Quayside, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 3DX

#### AUDITORS:

Albert Gurney, Chartered Accountant, 4 West Terrace, Seaton Sluice, NE26 4RE

#### BANKERS:

HSBC, 26 Bamburgh House, Manor Walks, Cramlington, NE23 6QE

#### GOVERNING DOCUMENT

The Phoenix Theatre (Blyth) is a company limited by guarantee, governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 31 December 2012. It was established following the dissolution of the previous company Phoenix Theatre Blyth Limited and the charity Blyth Arts and Community Association (B.A.C.A.)

#### ORGANISATION OF THE CHARITY

The company is administered by the Board of Directors (Trustees & Officers), who meet formally on a monthly basis to discuss all matters (operational and strategic). The company has no shareholders, but does have a trading company with two shares, owned by the Phoenix Theatre (Blyth).

## **TRUSTEES**

The number of Directors/Trustees shall not be less than three nor more than eight. On the incorporation of the Company, the first Trustees were designated as those who had previously been Directors/Trustees in the dissolved Company/Charity. Subsequent Directors/Trustees shall be appointed by the Board from time to time and at any time throughout the year. Directors/Trustees retire by rotation every 3 years at the first Board meeting of every calendar year, but can be reappointed. No Director/Trustee can serve for more than nine consecutive years (except in the event of exceptional circumstances).

## **TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The Charity Trustees (who are also the Board of Directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing a trustees' annual report and financial statements, in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom's Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). These financial statements must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the theatre and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period.

In preparing the financial statements, the Directors/Trustees are required to select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently, observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP, make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent, state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed and prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The Directors/Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, the financial position of the charity and to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985, the Charities Act 1993, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence take reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

The Trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error. A risk register has been established and is updated annually. Management accounts are prepared monthly and the performance of the charity is monitored by the entire board of trustees. Potential risks and threats are monitored constantly and any necessary action taken.

## **ACCOUNTS**

The Board of Directors/Trustees fulfil their responsibility for maintaining proper accounting records and safeguarding the assets of the charity and have appointed Albert Gurney, Chartered Accountant, as the Phoenix Theatre's Independent Examiner. Details of the

2022/23 accounts, together with supporting information have been submitted to the Charities Commission in a separate document.

## **AUDIT**

For the period ending 31 March 2023, the company was entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, relating to small companies.

## **BY ORDER OF THE BOARD/TRUSTEES**

Registered Office:  
The Phoenix Theatre  
37 Beaconsfield Street  
Blyth  
Northumberland  
NE24 2DS

David G Garrett  
(Chair and Chief Executive of the Board of Directors/Trustees)

**PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH)**

**ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023**

WEDNESDAY



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**PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH)**

**PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023**

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## **PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH)**

### **TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023**

### **LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

#### **CONSTITUTION**

PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH) is a registered charity number 1149700 and a company limited by guarantee registered with Companies House, Company number 08113214.

#### **TRUSTEES**

The trustees serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

##### **Chairman**

D G Garrett

##### **TREASURER**

P B Worth

##### **SECRETARY**

Ms A Thoburn

##### **OTHER**

D A McSparron (appointed 7th June 2023)

C Khass (resigned 31st January 2023)

R V Nixon

#### **REGISTERED OFFICE**

The Phoenix Theatre, Beaconsfield Street, Blyth, Northumberland, NE24 2DS.

#### **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

A Gurney, Chartered Accountant, 4 West Terrace, Seaton Sluice, Northumberland, NE26 4RE.

#### **BANKERS**

HSBC, 31 Bridge Street, Blyth, Northumberland, NE24 2AB.

#### **SOLICITORS**

Bond Dickinson LLP, St Annes Wharf, 112 Quayside, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 3DX

## **PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH)**

### **REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES**

#### **PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023**

The trustees are pleased to present their report together with the financial statements of the charity for the period ended 31st March 2023

Legal and administration information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, and the Statements of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities.

#### **OBJECTS OF THE CHARITY**

The purpose of the Charity are to promote and advance interest and education in the arts for the benefit of the public, and in particular for the benefit of the residents of Blyth Valley, by managing and maintaining a theatre known as "The Phoenix Theatre" and in particular by the production, promotion, presentation and management of plays, musical theatre, signing and dramatic and musical performances and by the provision or production any other artistic works.

To further provide facilities for the interest of social welfare for the recreation and leisure time occupation with the aim of improving the conditions of life of those residing in the said area and elsewhere.

#### **ORGANISATION**

A board of trustees who meet on a regular basis administer the charity. There is a management committee elected by the members to carry out the day to day running of the Association.

#### **REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS**

PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH) a new charitable company limited by guarantee was incorporated and registered with the Charity Commission, for the purpose of taking over the operation of the Blyth Arts and Community Association including its assets and liabilities with effect from 31st December 2012 liabilities.

The effect of the transfer is that PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH) Trading Limited has now acquired all the assets and undertaking of the Association, including the premises, with effect from 31st December 2012

Similarly the Company acquired the assets and liabilities of PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH) Trading Limited on the same date, with the Company now being a wholly owned subsidiary.

The trading position is as outlined on pages 5 and following to these financial statements.

## **PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH)**

**PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023**

### **TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The Trustees have adopted the following reserves policy

That will ensure that at all times the level of reserves is appropriate to the level of the Charity's activities. The Trustees will review annually the nature of the income and expenditure streams, the need to match variable income with fixed commitments and the nature of the reserves in order to decide on the level of reserves required for the Charity to be managed efficiently and to enable the future services to remain uninterrupted.

Use of Reserves are to be used to protect the long term delivery and continuity of services. Ensure the upkeep of the property and to help fund any major repairs / alterations required. Level / form reserves. Trustees decide on the reserves required. The current aim of the Charity is to hold reserves of at least £130,000. This figure will be kept under review as the cost base of the Theatre increases.

Decisions on the use of the reserves will be made by the Board. This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

### **TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The Charities Act 2011 requires the trustees to prepare financial statements that give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charity at the end of the financial year and of its surplus or deficit for the financial year. In doing so the trustees are required to :

select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently

make judgments that are reasonable and prudent : and

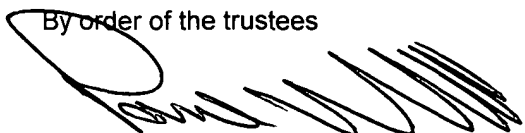
prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enables them to ensure that the financial statements comply with statutory requirement. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

### **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

A Gurney, Chartered Accountant was appointed to undertake an independent examination of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011.

By order of the trustees



**P B Worth**  
**Director**

**Date : 14th December 2023.**

**PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH)**

**PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023**

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH)**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above Charity for the period ended 31st March 2023

As the Charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011. ("the Act")

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

The Charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination being a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below)

The charity does not provide for depreciation of its land and buildings, which are included at historic costs. In this respect the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of the Act.

I have no concerns and 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.

**A GURNEY**

**Chartered Accountant**



**Date : 14th December 2023.**

**PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH)**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**

**PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023**

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
<b>Incoming resources</b>					
Activities for generating funds					
Commercial Activities	4	444,119	0	444,119	282,338
Operation of theatre and community association					
Fund raising and donations		838	0	838	11,600
Grants received	5	40,829	5,000	45,829	80,013
Interest		2,628	0	2,628	68
Subscriptions		175	0	175	170
Other		0	0	0	0
<b>Total incoming resources available for charitable application</b>		<b>488,589</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>493,589</b>	<b>374,189</b>
Less cost of generating funds					
Commercial Activities	4	281,001	0	281,001	149,123
<b>Net incoming resources available for charitable application</b>		<b>207,588</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>212,588</b>	<b>225,066</b>
<b>Charitable expenditure</b>					
Cost of operation of theatre and community association	4	120,968	0	120,968	67,773
<b>Total charitable expenditure</b>		<b>120,968</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>120,968</b>	<b>67,773</b>
<b>Movement in total funds for the period</b>		<b>86,620</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>91,620</b>	<b>157,293</b>
<b>Unrestricted funds brought forward</b>		<b>408,087</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>408,087</b>	<b>250,794</b>
<b>Transferred on re-organisation</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>1,277,300</b>	<b>1,277,300</b>	<b>1,277,300</b>
<b>Property dilapidations</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>130,000</b>	<b>130,000</b>	<b>130,000</b>
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>494,707</b>	<b>1,412,300</b>	<b>1,907,007</b>	<b>1,815,387</b>

All amounts relate to continuing operations.

The charity has no recognised gains or losses other than the surplus for the year.



**PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH)****BALANCE SHEET****AS AT 31st MARCH 2023**

	Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>					
Tangible Assets	6		1,439,206		1,447,001
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
Investments	7	6		6	
Stocks	8	2,781		5,445	
Debtors	9	8,064		6,341	
Cash in hand and at bank		<u>580,467</u>		<u>524,438</u>	
		591,318		536,230	
<b>CREDITORS</b>					
Amounts falling due within one year	10	<u>123,517</u>		<u>167,844</u>	
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>			467,801		368,386
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			<u>1,907,007</u>		<u>1,815,387</u>
<b>CREDITORS</b>					
Amounts falling due after more than one year	10		0		0
<b>NET ASSETS</b>			<u>1,907,007</u>		<u>1,815,387</u>
<b>RESERVES</b>	Page 5		<u>1,907,007</u>		<u>1,815,387</u>

For the period ended 31st March 2023 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the period in question in accordance with section 476.

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

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

Approved by the board on 14th December 2023.



P B Worth

director

# PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH)

## NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023

### 1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP FRS 102) and comply with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 issued under the Charities Act 2011. There were no material departures from the standard.

The financial statements set out on pages 1 to 11 are prepared under the historical cost convention.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the Company. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The following accounting policies have been used consistently in dealing with items which are considered material to the Charity's affairs.

#### (a) Commercial trading activities

Income from commercial activities is included in the period in which the Charity is entitled to receive the income

#### (b) Donations and grants

Income from donations and grants, including capital grants, is included in incoming resources when these are receivable, except as follows:

when donors specify that donations and grants given to the charity must be used in future accounting periods, the income is deferred until those periods.

when donors impose conditions which have to be fulfilled before the charity becomes entitled to use such income, the income is deferred and not included in incoming resources until the pre-conditions of use have been met.

When donors specify that donations and grants, including capital grants, are for particular restricted purposes, which do not amount to pre-conditions regarding entitlement, this income is included in restricted funds when receivable.

#### (c) Interest receivable

Interest is included when receivable by the charity.

#### (d) Resources expended

Resources expended are included in the statement of financial activities on an accruals basis, inclusive of any VAT which cannot be recovered.

Certain expenditure is directly attributable to specific activities and has been included in those cost categories.

## PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH)

### NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

#### PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023

##### (e) Fixed Assets

Individual fixed assets are capitalised at net cost. Land and Buildings represent the gross cost to the charity. In previous years this has been shown after the deduction of grants receivable.

Other tangible fixed assets are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated depreciation and impairment costs.

Depreciation is calculated so as to write-off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value over the useful economic life of the asset on a straight-line basis as follows:

Land and Buildings	0 % per annum
Plant and Machinery	20 % per annum
Fixtures and fittings	20 % per annum

##### (f) Stocks

Stocks are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Cost as determined on a first in first out basis.

##### (g) Taxation

The Company is a charity within the meaning of Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 Finance Act 2010. Accordingly, the Company is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains within categories covered by Chapter 3 of Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

##### (h) Trade Creditors

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if the Association does not have unconditional rights, at the end of the reporting period, to defer settlement of the creditor for at least twelve months after the reporting date.

Trade creditors are recognised initially at the transaction price and subsequently measured at the amortised cost using the effective interest method.

## 2 REVENUE RECOGNITION

Turnover is recognised at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable for services supplied, stated net of discounts and of Value Added Tax. Turnover is recognised at the point the goods are sold or services provided.

## 3 LEGAL STATUS OF CHARITY

PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH) is a registered charity number 1149700 and a company limited by guarantee registered with Companies House, Company number 08113214.

**PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH)**

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023**

**4 OPERATION OF CHARITY**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>INCOME</b>				
Bar	47,186		27,209	
Productions	245,757		160,186	
Third party income	115,907		84,681	
Catering etc	3,168		1,298	
Other income	7,997		754	
Programmes	137		216	
Rental charges	17,379		4,772	
Sweets and Ice Creams	6,588		3,222	
		<b>444,119</b>		<b>282,338</b>
<b>COST OF SALES</b>				
Bar	29,763		11,765	
Cinema costs	15,507		0	
Productions	176,321		108,168	
Hirer costs	59,410		29,190	
		<b>281,001</b>		<b>149,123</b>
<b>OPERATING PROFIT</b>		<b>163,118</b>		<b>133,215</b>
<b>COST OF OPERATION OF THEATRE</b>				
<b>Wages and Freelance Costs</b>	<b>36,255</b>		<b>15,086</b>	
<b>Pension Contributions</b>	<b>1,644</b>		<b>48</b>	
Advertising, printing, postage and stationery	11,190		7,996	
Cleaning, maintenance and equipment hire	14,351		10,739	
Covid safe costs	0		164	
Entertaining	285		150	
Heat, light and water	12,502		6,921	
Insurance	10,284		7,448	
I T costs	469		4,152	
Licences and performing rights	9,527		4,097	
Telephones and internet	1,278		1,017	
Training	35		0	
Travelling	430		37	
Accountancy	1,880		1,553	
Professional fees	3,000		0	
Bank and credit charges	1,079		385	
Depreciation	15,664		7,492	
Other expenses	1,095		488	
		<b>120,968</b>		<b>67,773</b>
<b>Net operating profit</b>		<b>42,150</b>		<b>65,442</b>

**PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH)**

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023**

<b>5</b>	<b>GRANTS RECEIVED</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	<b>Comprised :</b>		
	HMRC - Furlough Support	0	547
	NCC	40,829	40,829
	NCC Cinema Support Grant	0	27,970
	NCC Covid Business Support Grants	0	10,667
	Ridley Charity Grant Restricted	5,000	0
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		45,829	80,013

**6** **FIXED ASSETS**

The movement on these during the period was as follows:

<b>Cost</b>	<b>Freehold Property £</b>	<b>Plant &amp; Equipment £</b>	<b>Fixtures &amp; Fittings £</b>	<b>Total £</b>
As at 1st April 2022	1,379,572	175,670	32,451	1,587,693
Additions	0	0	7,869	7,869
Grants received	0	0	0	0
Disposals	0	0	0	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
As at 31st March 2023	1,379,572	175,670	40,320	1,595,562
<b>Depreciation</b>				
As at 1st April 2022	0	108,242	32,450	140,692
Additions	0	14,984	680	15,664
Disposals	0	0	0	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
As at 31st March 2023	0	123,226	33,130	156,356
<b>Net Book Value</b>				
As at 31st March 2023	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,379,572	52,444	7,190	1,439,206
As at 31st March 2022	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,379,572	67,428	1	1,447,001

**PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH)**

**PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT**

**PERIOD ENDED 31st MARCH 2023**

<b>7</b>	<b>INVESTMENTS</b>			<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
				<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	Represents the issued share capital of PHOENIX THEATRE (BLYTH) (Trading) Limited a wholly owned subsidiary.			6	6
<b>8</b>	<b>STOCKS</b>			<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	Stocks comprised:			<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	Bar stocks			2,781	5,445
<b>9</b>	<b>DEBTORS</b>			<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	Debtors comprised:			<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	Other debtors and prepayments			8,064	6,341
<b>10</b>	<b>CREDITORS</b>				
		<b>Amounts due</b>	<b>Amounts due</b>		
		<b>within one year</b>	<b>due after one year</b>		
		<b>March</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>March</b>
		<b>2023</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2022</b>
	Creditors comprised:	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	Barclaycard	2,031	3,001		
	Trade creditors	1,224	4,955		
	Amounts due to the Phoenix Theatre				
	Blyth (Trading) Limited	39,096	39,096		
	Advanced bookings	69,267	73,274		
	Advanced grants	0	40,829		
	Other taxes and social security	9,299	4,349		
	Other creditors	2,600	2,340		
		123,517	167,844	0	0