

Chairman's Report November'24-November '25

Good evening and thank you for coming along to our AGM for 24/25. Our first in our new home at Fforestfach. Your support is not only appreciated, but extremely important to the continued success of The Rising Stars Theatre Company QAVS.

I'll relate a quick summary of the past year.

Last December we were invited to perform at Sketty Christmas Fayre. This is such a festive event that some of our volunteers are involved in the organisation of. It was a fabulous event, and we must have been a success as we have been invited back to perform yet again this year.

We had a fun Christmas party which everyone really enjoyed. Many thanks to Lloyd's dad, Chris, for generously providing the disco. A big thank you to Nicola Jones too, for organising everyone's options for the 'take-away' buffet. It was a tad stressful...but of course, it was alright on the night.

The Stars shone at the ALN concert in the Grand Theatre Arts Wing. Participating in and appreciating the talents of others. At that point our festive batteries were fully charged.

We welcomed the new year in with a visit to the Grand Theatre to see the pantomime. Always a popular trip, but this time it was even more so as our tickets were very generously funded by Swansea Bay Foundation. We all love a freebie!

Due to the success of Yee Haw at the Grand Theatre in October, we took the plunge and went 'on tour'. We made sure our passports were in order and crossed the bridge to Y Ffwrness in Llanelli. We knew it was a bit of a risk...unchartered territory. We are not known in that area and as a disability theatre group we are not always at the top of everyone's list. But, bearing all that in mind, we still managed to sell almost 300 tickets. We certainly had some new faces in the audience. I personally spoke to one family who had come from Llandeilo. Their son had DS and they were very envious of what we provide to our Stars as there is nothing similar in their area. I have to say that they attended thanks to our TikTok star, Joel, who had promoted the show on his platform. Personally, I think the venue was a success, despite being extremely hard work for the few committee members who had to transport costumes and props both ways, with the help of A Man and A Van and Grace's dad, Liam. We desperately need more muscle at showtime. I appreciate people have to work, but if you know of anyone who might help out, it would be gratefully appreciated. It's very important that we spread the word about the abilities of people with a learning challenges, and also, for our Stars, it's important that we give them an opportunity to perform more than once, So much hard work goes into a show, not to mention all the work that goes into the costumes and props. It seems a waste just to perform once.

Our red-carpet evening was held at Grand Theatre Arts Wing and was amazing as always. The Stars loved being in the limelight, in their posh frocks and black ties. They love to see themselves up on the big screen. I enjoy watching their faces, and seeing them being so supportive and appreciative of each other. Plus there's always audience participation!

Lucy Craggs continues to help out with the Admin, and apply for funding when necessary. We've been fortunate this year that, with careful budgeting, we haven't needed to apply for that much. Lucy introduced our card machine, which made things a lot easier when selling tickets at the raffle and for people wanting to donate both at the show, but more importantly, at any time.

I'm not sure if you all know, but we have in fact started a 'Minis' group. They are actually all members of Hands Up For Downs and pay us for room hire, insurance and Tutor fees. They meet here every Thursday in term time at 4.30pm and Nikki and Lucy run the group. We met with them at half term and the feedback we had was very positive with them wishing to continue the sessions. We have also spoken about starting an extra night to accommodate new Stars, but that is in very early discussions with the Tutors who need to work out their availability. Watch this space.

We are still struggling with volunteer numbers. So once again, the call goes out to people who can commit to weekly meetings. There is a ratio that we need to adhere to. We have just brought in a rewards scheme, for all volunteers including committee. It's called Star Credits. Credits are earned by attending sessions, doing extra sessions, attending extra performances etc. Accumulated credits can be traded in for a gift card of choice.

We have got Ryan on board with our social media. Please share any posts that you see if you are on Facebook, Instagram or TikTok. Also, our website has been updated. It's much improved and far more user friendly. It will be updated at various points throughout the year. Please take a look and let us know what you think.

There will be individual reports from each group, but generally it is good to see that the membership has not altered in Seniors and Juniors, and Outreach has grown over the past year. We still have no room for new members in Seniors as we have to keep some space for those due to graduate from Juniors, hence the proposed second evening. With this in mind, it is important to stress a few things.

- **Regular attendance is vital as these spaces are much coveted and could easily be given to someone else. We have now introduced attendance figures which will be sent to parents three times a year. Attendance percentage will also determine the type of role a Star is given in a show.**
- **All of our members must satisfy the criteria i.e need extra support within a school setting / attend a day service / be unable to access a mainstream drama group**
- **Subscriptions must be paid on time as we have weekly overheads that need to be covered**
- **When we ask for attendance at events outside of our regular sessions, this is not a choice as it is part of the membership of RS. Obviously illness and prior engagements are taken into account. But members would be expected to attend the majority throughout the year.**

Here comes the emotional part.

Going forward, there will be some big changes. We are losing Shan from her role as trustee. I believe Shan came on board way back in 2010. As we all know, Shan's talent has raised the level of our shows. I'm sure Michelle and Nikki won't mind me saying that. There is always talk around the costumes after the show. She is always bursting with creative ideas, once the theme of the show has been shared with us. Running around with her measuring tape. Making adjustments. Getting anyone who will listen to cut out a pattern. Pin and tack. Watching the smoke coming off her machine as we get closer to the date. Being terrified to tell her there's been a change of role for someone. Ha ha! She has also enrolled her husband Tim who conjures up our fantastic props. Come up with an idea and Tim will produce it. The money that Shan and Tim have saved

us over the years is incalculable. I rue the day when this double act are no longer able to, or don't wish to continue their work for us. I'm sure you will join me in thanking Shan and Tim for everything that they have created over many years and that you will continue to show appreciation for her hard work...all unpaid...and generosity.

We are also saying goodbye to Awena. The Trustee who thinks that she doesn't contribute to the group. Well you will find Awena's name on our original constitution in 2007. So over 18 years, you definitely have contributed more than you realise. Over the years Awena has had many roles within the committee, most recently as Treasurer, and everyone's worst nightmare if they haven't paid their subs. Queen of the raffle. The amount of money we have raised because of Awena's persistence in ensuring everyone bought a minimum of 2 books...including our old neighbours from the Model Railway Club. Awena, the quiet one, who is always there, who sends a private text to just relay her appreciation or just check in. She is also Shan's right hand woman when it comes to costumes. Awena, we all thank you for your outstanding contribution to RSTC.

And so, this is also my last year as Chairperson and also as Trustee of RSTC. This was not an easy decision for me, but as the majority of you know, this year has been a very difficult one for me. Cancer has taught me that this is no rehearsal. Plus, you don't need any unnecessary stress in your life. I too have been part of the committee since September 2007. It has been a massive part of my life, basically because The Spotlight Theatre Company, as it was previously known, was the only group that were prepared to give Ross a chance when he was a very challenging child. I will be eternally grateful to Stevie and Keith who ran the group at the time. This left me with no doubt that when we became RSTC I would give 100% at all times. 18 years later, I feel that I have done that to the best of my ability. It hasn't always been easy. It's very disheartening when you are questioned, challenged and criticised, bearing in mind that we are all volunteers. The highlights for me have been when we were lucky enough to have Michelle and Nikki come into our lives at a time when we thought it may be the end of the road for us. Also when our Company performed their first show on the stage at the Grand Theatre. Wow! What a pinch me moment that was. When we first walked in the Christmas Parade and were received so well by the supporting crowds. The way we coped with lockdown. We were at our best then. Innovative, imaginative, supportive, reliable. Then, to have the reward of the Queens Award for Voluntary Services with a distinction for our support during lockdown...it was unbelievable! Shan and I were extremely lucky to be able to go to the garden party at Buckingham Palace. A day I'll always remember.

I step down knowing that we have a great group of Trustees to take things forward. They have fantastic skills, knowledge and experience. I trust them to continue to put the Stars needs first and fly the flag for putting the ability into disability.

I want you to know how privileged you are to be part of this fantastic theatre company. I'm sure you probably know that. I hope it fills your life with as much joy as it has given to me. Thank you

Gina Cameron (Chairperson)





			OPENING BALANCE		£	9,857.71
INCOME			EXPENDITURE			
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS						
Subscriptions	£14,763.00	Room Rental	£2,914.00			
Transfer from Savings Account	£10,017.97	Storage Rooms	£2,250.00			
Additional Subs	£195.00	Additional Storage	£121.00			
Swansea Lottery	£405.50	Wages - Tutors and Admin	£16,135.75			
South Wales Police Youth Trust	£100.00	Insurance	£1,163.16			
Donations - miscellaneous	£292.00	Costumes and Props	£749.35			
Sumup Donations	£182.50	Vaughn Sound	£960.00			
Show Raffle & Programmes	£1,442.00	Show Technicians (Red Media & Chris Barrett)	£650.00			
PayPal Account Transfer	£2,132.48	Show Lighting	£472.00			
Yee Haw Show	£5,968.56	Container	£2,964.00			
Collection Box	£173.01	Miscellaneous	£729.04			
Other raffles	£687.30	Pantomime Tickets	£1,287.00			
Charity Quiz	£60.00	Web Site - creation and maintenance	£390.00			
		Red Carpet Event	£496.82			
RESTRICTED FUNDS		City & County of Swansea - Theatre Hire	£277.56			
Swansea Law Society	£363.07	Printing	£264.53			
Junior Lawyers Donation	£323.00	Vodafone	£146.04			
Oakdale Trust	£2,000.00	Artes Productions	£270.00			
Gowerton School	£300.00	Social Media	£360.00			
Professional Toget Charity Donation	£150.00	Disco Lights	£119.99			
		Sumup Machine	£94.80			
		Seuss Show Tickets	£154.00			
		Certificates, frames and boxes	£117.40			
		SCVS Courses	£105.00			
		Christmas Party	£470.11			
		Committee/Tutor Meeting	£187.50			
		Ace - Leaving Party	£129.88			
Total Income (excluding transfer)	£29,537.42	Total Expenditure	£33,978.93			-£4,441.51
			CLOSING BALANCE			£15,434.17
			32 DAY NOTICE ACCOUNT			£10,456.26
			TOTAL			£25,890.43

**EXAMINER'S UNQUALIFIED REPORT FOR RISING
STARS THEATRE COMPANY**
CHARITY NUMBER: 1150783

Please accept this as an examiner's unqualified report for the Rising Stars Theatre Company, who have a gross income of £250,000 or less in the financial year 01/09/2024 to 31/08/2025.

This is an independent report to the trustees of Rising Stars Theatre Company. I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Rising Stars Theatre Company for the year ended 31st August 2025

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 all 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 in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

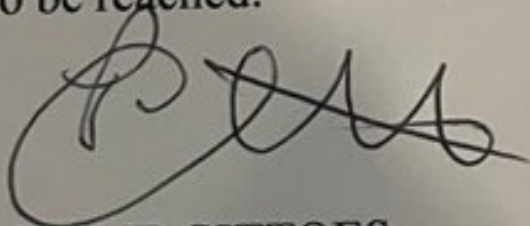
1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act;

or

2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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.

Signed:



Name:

PHILIP GITTOES

Address:

23 Marine Walk, Swansea, SA1 1YQ

Date:

16th February 2026