

# MORTAL FOOLS

England & Wales · Charity number 1153400

## Details

---

Other names	NORTHERN ARTS ENTERPRISES, MORTAL FOOLS, TYNE VALLEY YOUTH THEATRE
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	<a href="#">08102487</a>
Registered	2013-08-14
Register	<a href="#">View on the Charity Commission register</a>

## Contact

---

**Address** Wansbeck Workspace  
Rotary Parkway  
Ashington  
Northumberland  
NE63 8QZ

**Phone** 0191 5801250

**Email** [info@mortalfools.org.uk](mailto:info@mortalfools.org.uk)

**Website** [www.mortalfools.org.uk](http://www.mortalfools.org.uk)

## Activities

---

**Objects:** For the benefit of the public particularly but not exclusively in the north of England, the Company's Objects are, through the teaching, practice and showcasing of the arts in all their forms:(1) To help children and young people develop their skills, capacity and capabilities to enable them to participate fully in society as responsible, mature and fulfilled individuals;(2) To advance the mental health education of children, young people, their significant adults and the general public to improve mental wellbeing;(3) To promote, support and improve the social inclusion of children and young people who are socially excluded by providing them with opportunities to access activities and develop their skills and experiences in such a way that they are better able to participate more fully in society;(For the purposes of this clause 'socially excluded' means children and young people (up to aged 25) who are excluded from society, or parts of society (like social circles) as a result of one or more of the following factors: socio-economic circumstances; race; gender; poor educational or skills attainment; mental health; disability; bullying and harassment and ethnic origin. (4) To maintain, improve, and advance arts education of children and young people, professional artists and the general public.

**Activities:** 1. Using arts-based techniques to provide professional training and personal development activities2. Running an ensemble youth theatre company for young people between 8 & 193. Running drama and theatre-making activities in schools 4. Offering workshops to educate children & adults in life skills and technical theatre skills5. Performing plays for the general public

## Classification

---

- **How:** Provides Human Resources, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training, Arts/culture/heritage/science
- **Who:** Children/young People, People With Disabilities, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

## Geography

---

- Cheshire West & Chester
- Cumbria
- Durham
- Gateshead
- Newcastle Upon Tyne City
- Northumberland
- Sunderland

## Finances

---

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£620,346	£655,772	£336,015	14
2024-03-31	£592,789	£610,792	£371,441	13
2023-03-31	£434,654	£492,393	-	-
2022-03-31	£620,609	£382,441	£447,183	11
2021-03-31	£485,890	£405,146	-	-

## Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
<b>Richard Wise</b>	Chair	2018-07-05
Eloise Grace Barber		2025-09-15
Katie Louise Crawley		2024-06-17
Kelly Louise Martin		2024-03-18
Lesley Anne Jobson		2023-12-11
Maisie Bjork Elizabeth Saunders		2023-06-26
Mark Gate		2023-07-01
Nicola Leyden		2023-09-25
Rachel Pattinson		2018-07-05

**MORTAL FOOLS**

England & Wales - Charity number 1153400

---

# Accounts

---

Company Registration Number 08102487

Registered Charity Number 1153400

# **MORTAL FOOLS**

(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

## **REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**

**For the year ending 31 March 2025**



**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**NOTE FROM THE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES**

As last year, Mortal Fools has successfully navigated another year shaped by economic uncertainty, continued political upheaval, and an increasingly competitive funding landscape. Despite these headwinds, we achieved what we hoped to and more. We reached around 10,000 young people, more than ever before, and importantly this group was more diverse than at any point in our history. We have continued to co-create high quality artistic work and maintained an unwavering focus on a programme for our communities.

While rooted in Ashington, our national profile continues to grow. This year has underlined our reputation as a trailblazing organisation, through the expansion of our work and the way we are governed and led. Having two young people on our Board of Trustees has been particularly refreshing; both are former members of our youth theatre. Their presence is exemplar, demonstrating the strength of our pipeline and integrity of our values in action. They are role models for the young people we engage and for their fellow trustees, their insight has strengthened our decision-making and added breadth to the perspectives that shape our direction.

Financial resilience has been a defining feature. Our turnover has grown although only modestly, which is impressive in these testing times. We continue to mature and have learnt to become more agile in our approach. Our resilience and resolve has been tested in full particularly managing the disappointment of not securing the Animating Ashington commission and the continued challenges in ever more competitive grant fund arena. These challenges have underlined the skill and expertise of our senior team and Board, who continue to balance ambition, sustainability and wellbeing.

This year, Trustees have supported the creation of a new Executive Director role, and we are delighted with the appointment of Ellie Turner. This development reflects the growing confidence of Mortal Fools as an organisation and our determination to ensure that leadership capacity supports our innovation and growth. Trustees also supported the move from the YMCA to new premises in Ashington, which was the right move, even though new venues have needed to be sourced to deliver our programmes.

As ever, progress has required immense energy from staff and Trustees alike. Yet the results are clear: pride and ownership is felt across all levels of the organisation, positive morale and wellbeing, and the ability to react to challenges. We continue to provide excellent working conditions, underpinned by our commitment to the real living wage. We work hard to ensure we maintain a supportive workplace built on strong leadership, fairness and integrity.

The wider economic climate remains stagnant, with public funding under sustained strain and cost of living pressures continuing to rise. Encouragingly, however, there is a growing recognition of the importance of mental health, preventative measures, and wellbeing. These developments align to the very core of Mortal Fools' mission and reinforce the enduring relevance of our work.

This is our third year in Ashington, and our impact continues to spread further afield. Alongside sustained delivery in Tyne Valley, our reach is increasingly national, supported by the digital expansion of programmes such as Melva.

On behalf of the Board and our beneficiaries, I would like to extend heartfelt thanks to the entire team, our partners, and our supporters for another excellent year.



Richard Wise, Chair of Trustees

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

The Trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year to 31 March 2025.

**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

<b>Registered charity name</b>	Mortal Fools
<b>Charity registration number</b>	1153400
<b>Company registration number</b>	08102487
<b>Registered office</b>	Wansbeck Workspace, Rotary Parkway, Ashington, Northumberland NE63 8QZ

**Trustees**

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

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

Mr R Wise (Chair)	
Ms E Barber	Appointed 15 September 2025
Mrs K Crawley	Appointed 17 June 2024
Mr P Douglas	Resigned 26 September 2024
Mr M Gate	
Mrs L Jobson	
Ms N Leyden	
Mrs K Martin	
Ms R Pattinson	
Mr S Rutherford-Orrrock	
Miss M Saunders	
Ms S Spencer	
Miss K Stanforth	Resigned 19 August 2025

**Company Secretary** Ms S Allen

**Bankers** Triodos Bank, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AS

**Independent Examiner** Pete O'Hara FCA, Chartered Accountant, 26 La Sagesse,  
Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 3AF

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

**Governing Documents**

Mortal Fools is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 12 June 2012, as Northern Arts Enterprises Limited, and registered as a charity on 14 August 2013.

It was established under the Memorandum of Association that established its objects and powers and is governed under its Articles of Association, as amended by special resolutions registered at Companies House on 5 July 2012, 3 September 2012, 8 August 2013, 12 May 2016, 22 February 2018, 1 December 2020 and 28 February 2022.

The Directors of the company are also Trustees of the charity.

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

**Charitable Purpose**

Mortal Fools charitable objects are for the benefit of the public particularly but not exclusively in the north of England, through the teaching, practice and showcasing of the arts in all their forms:

- (1) To help children and young people develop their skills, capacity and capabilities to enable them to participate fully in society as responsible, mature and fulfilled individuals;
- (2) To advance the mental health education of children, young people, their significant adults and the general public to improve mental wellbeing;
- (3) To promote, support and improve the social inclusion of children and young people who are socially excluded by providing them with opportunities to access activities and develop their skills and experiences in such a way that they are better able to participate more fully in society;

For the purposes of this clause 'socially excluded' means children and young people (up to aged 25) who are excluded from society, or parts of society (like social circles) as a result of one or more of the following factors: socio-economic circumstances; race; gender; poor educational or skills attainment; mental health; disability; bullying and harassment and ethnic origin.

- (4) To maintain, improve, and advance arts education of children and young people, professional artists and the general public.

**Board Structure & Operation**

The charity currently has 11 Trustees, and recruitment remains open to refresh the membership and continue to bring new professional expertise and relevant lived experience to the Board, including a further incoming trustee under 21. Trustees participate in governance development through external training, including Anti-Racism, LGBTQIA+ Awareness and Safeguarding.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)**

**Board Structure & Operation (Cont.)**

The full Board meets quarterly, has at least one additional away day for strategic planning with leadership team staff and participates in a company development day with the whole staff team.

For accessibility and inclusivity, regular Board meetings are offered as hybrid – with some folks meeting in person and some dialing in via Zoom. The charity invested in technical conferencing equipment to make these meetings as high quality as possible.

Three Sub-Groups meet quarterly – usually online – between full Board meetings. They are a combination of leadership team, staff members and trustees. The current Sub-Groups are:

- Finance, Audit and Risk (FAR) group - financial management, company risk register, business planning / operations, legal compliance.
- People group – HR, EDI and company culture, Ethical Business Practices.
- Green Team – environmental responsibility and sustainability.

Minutes are taken from all Sub-Group meetings.

The operating model of a fourth sub-group - Artistic, Delivery & Practice (ADP) (creative programme development, delivery practice, multi-sector partnerships, safeguarding) is currently under review.

For all full Board meetings, an agenda, detailed written business reports and specific subject papers are prepared by senior staff and circulated to trustees in advance of Board meetings, integrating notes from sub-group meetings.

The charity has almost filled the number of trustees allowed within its current governing document. To accommodate a greater number of young people as trustees (18-25), in 2025-26, the charity will amend the governing document to allow this.

**Appointment and Induction of Trustees**

Trustees are recruited via a combination of open advertising and contacts via personal and professional networks. In all cases, Trustees are elected to the Board following the same process:

- Submission of an application letter and CV
- Interview by two Trustees (considering skills, experience, alignment with company values, gaps within current governance)
- Opportunity to observe a Board meeting and a meeting with Chair of trustees and CEO
- Recommendation of appointment to full Board and appointment at general meeting

The Trustee Induction Process will be reviewed and updated in 2025-26. It includes a range of resources to support newcomers' understanding of their role and the charity's activities, and signposting to training by external providers, with the Company covering any costs associated with the training.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)**

**Reserves Policy**

The Trustees have reviewed the charity's needs for reserves in line with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission.

The Trustees aim to hold a level of Unrestricted Reserves which enables the charity to have sufficient financial resources to meet various liabilities which would occur if Mortal Fools were unable to continue operating, together with an allowance to enable the charity to respond flexibly to issues or appropriate initiatives which might be identified outside of its annual budgeting process.

At present, the Trustees estimate that the Unrestricted Reserves required to cover all known liabilities for a period of 3 months amounts to approximately £145,000 and that this should be the minimum Free Reserves Target held in the accounts. The Trustees recognise that these liabilities will increase as the charity continues to grow.

Mortal Fools currently holds total Unrestricted Reserves at 31 March 2025 of £209,940 (2024: £209,256).

'Free Reserves', defined as total non-designated Unrestricted Funds minus the value of unrestricted Tangible Fixed Assets of £562, are £209,378 (2024: £208,916).

Although this exceeds the minimum target level at 31 March 2025, the Trustees note that the charity's financial operating model involves regular spending of unrestricted funds for core organisational costs and consider these figures satisfactory.

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

**Grant-making**

The charity does not currently engage in grant-making activity.

**Contribution of Volunteers**

The charity makes limited use of volunteers within its productions and to support its activities.

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

**Aims & Objectives**

Mortal Fools' core purpose is to support people to have better quality inter-personal relationships with one another – as a fundamental component of wellbeing – and to use participation in creative and performance-based activities as the methodology to achieve this.

We specialise in the co-creation of compelling, dynamic, socially-relevant and high-quality creative and performance-based work with children, young people and communities.

We work with 1,000s of children and young people every year, mostly in the North East.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**Aims & Objectives (Cont.)**

We develop our skills, knowledge and approach through dynamic multi-sector partnerships (Youth, Community, Health, Education, and Arts and Culture), jointly co-designing work to meet the contemporary needs of children and young people.

We are champions of theatre and performance produced by young people and for young people. We advocate for this work to be recognised and supported as an important art form in our sector, touring our work nationally, supporting participatory artists to train in co-creation, and embedding the achievement of positive wellbeing outcomes across all our work.

Our use of digital technology to engage a more diverse cohort of beneficiaries and audiences continues to be a great success and our future plans includes further development of this.

**WHY we do what we do**

We are a purpose-driven organisation. Our work must be relevant to and matter in wider society and make a demonstrable and measurable difference to those we work with.

We recognise that the presence of positive and secure interpersonal relationships is a key factor in personal wellbeing, motivation, civil engagement and life fulfilment. We use drama and theatre-based approaches – interpersonal by nature – to support people to build the skills and knowledge to form and maintain better relationships. This work is positive action against the shift towards the divided, competitive and aggressive societal changes seen in the UK and wider world in recent years.

Through all our work we advocate for, demonstrate and give people ways to form better relationships and learn how positive connection and shared positive experiences with one another can be used to prevent those things which drive us apart. Positive mental health and wellbeing outcomes are an integral part of our work. We use the ratified PERMA™ Framework as our approach to planning, monitoring and evaluating the impact of our work on wellbeing outcomes.

Our work helps people to bring about changes in behaviour and outlook, increasing in confidence, experiencing personal accomplishment, building their personal resilience, shaping a more positive self-image and setting themselves up for a more positive future.

**HOW we work**

We use high-quality drama and the process of making and performing theatre-based work as our primary tools for change. Our work explores contemporary concerns facing children and young people and the realities of the world we're living in right now – inviting positive change.

**We have 4 key values that shape everything we do:**

**1. CONTRIBUTING - *Everyone Matters***

Co-creation is at the centre of everything we do. All our team and everyone we work with contributes to shaping our programmes and our activities, helping us to learn and make an impact.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**Aims & Objectives (Cont.)**

Our activities are participatory, with ideas being supported, acted upon and recognised from all involved. Our activities are an asset in the lives of the people we work with, making a positive contribution and influence in both grassroots and strategic multi-sector settings.

We consistently evaluate our work so we remain relevant to wider society and make a tangible positive contribution.

**2. GROWING - *Becoming more***

We are bold, ambitious and entrepreneurial. We embrace challenges and are not afraid of failure. We champion a *growth mindset* and constantly look to learn from others. We are committed to continuous reflection and development, supporting everyone with the right level of challenge to become more.

We receive feedback graciously and gratefully and use supportive and constructive ways to give and respond to feedback.

**3. WITH OTHERS - *Better Together***

Our activities bring people together – to achieve, to learn and to have fun – with curiosity, co-creation and kindness at the heart of everything we do. We seek out people to work with who know things that we do not, integrating ongoing input from our beneficiaries, artists and others we work with or whose work relates to our own. We prioritise working with partners who share our values and whose work has similar motivations.

We support the development of key interpersonal skills like empathy, teamwork and resilience for all who work with us. We care for one another, and this compassion helps us to build strong, lasting and fruitful relationships.

**4. AS OURSELVES - *Always authentic***

We create safe spaces which support and encourage everyone to be their authentic, imperfect selves - with individual strengths, vulnerabilities, lived experiences, emotions and needs. We recognise, respect and embrace our differences, understanding that this makes us all stronger, more empathetic and wiser.

We strive to meet the needs of everyone we work with, making sure our company is welcoming and inclusive to people from all walks of life. We create environments that are genuinely supportive and accessible, where everyone feels valued as an individual, and is enabled to contribute.

As a company, we do not copy or try to compete with others. We confidently walk our own path, and we seek to work with those who also value authenticity and openness.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**Aims & Objectives (Cont.)**

**WHAT we do**

We have several programmes of activity. Each of them achieves a combination of the following objectives:

- a) Enable children and young people to co-create with professional artists, treating young people as artists in their own right.
- b) Inspire people to make positive behavioural change through dynamic youth-led theatre productions, short films, creative digital assets and workshops.
- c) Learn through working with multi-sector organisations, schools, individuals, and artists who share our values.
- d) Co-construct drama and theatre-based approaches which enrich the provision within formal education settings, including training teachers and improve the personal, social, and educational outcomes of pupils.
- e) Make dynamic, engaging, and relevant contemporary theatre for young audiences, especially those who are under-served.
- f) Programme exciting theatre by other companies and artists – prioritise bringing this to under-served settings.
- g) Raise the profile of artistic work produced by young people.
- h) Improve mental health and wellbeing of beneficiaries and embed this at all stages of projects.
- i) Embody and champion inclusive approaches to co-creation, collaboration and creativity including providing a broad range of activities, working in-person and digitally designed to accommodate a range of access needs (e.g. special educational needs, logistical, age-specific, low cost).
- j) Reduce barriers to taking part by using in-person and digital engagement and producing our work in a range of settings, community buildings, schools, outdoor spaces, and professional theatre venues - prioritising areas of socio-economic disadvantage or rural isolation that are under-served.
- k) Create new pathways into participatory arts careers including work experience, internships, training, mentoring, volunteering and employment.
- l) Run practical skills training for multi-sector businesses supporting them to learn how to connect better interpersonally in the workplace, with clients and as leaders.
- m) Provide opportunities for participants to work with a diverse range of dynamic professional artists and companies and other specialist practitioners.
- n) Signpost young people to other available arts activities through our networks.
- o) Provide training, mentoring, volunteering and employment for young and/or early career participatory artists and practitioners, especially those working with young people.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**Our Activity Programmes**

**PROGRAMME 1: YOUTH THEATRE (objectives achieved are: a,b,e,g,h,l,j,m,n)**

**Youth Theatre**

A term-time programme of activities with groups in West and South East Northumberland, providing a fun, safe and active environment where young people aged 7-19 explore their own lives and their wider world through drama and theatre. In these sessions, young people co-create dynamic, thought-provoking, original theatre alongside professional theatre artists - with the young people's ideas, emotions and experiences at the heart.

Following an evaluation of how best to meet the core needs of our beneficiaries and allocate our resources, during the year, we began the process of discontinuing Youth Theatre groups in West Northumberland to create capacity for expansion in Ashington – where there is greater need and demand.

The Youth Theatre groups include:

- Tyne Valley, West Northumberland: Stage 2 (school years 3-6) – discontinued from Summer 2024; Stage 3/4 (school years 7-11) and a resident Youth Theatre partnership with Highfield Middle School in Prudhoe, West Northumberland – scheduled to end Summer 2025.
- Ashington, South East Northumberland: Stage 2 (school years 3-6); Stage 3/4 (school years 7-11).

In 2024-25, our MFYT groups created an original film series entitled 'Sounding Board', live performance events in both operating locations entitled 'Light Up' and began R&D of a new project called 'Watch this Space' on the theme of change.

**Ensemble Young Company**

This programme for school years 9-13 and up to age 19 moved to a year-long operating model in 2024-25 academic year. It supports teenagers to co-create and tour original theatre in a process closely aligned with professional theatre production.

Young company members originate from our two main operational locations.

In 2024-25, the Ensemble Young Company toured their completed production 'Inevitable?' (Apr 2024) to venues in the Northeast and North West of England and created their new production – 'Brainstorm'.

**PROGRAMME 2: FUTURE READY (a,b,c,d,h,l,j,m,n)**

**Young Cultural Leaders**

Supporting young people in their broader personal development through social action projects, event management, Peer Facilitation training, volunteering and work experience. This includes opportunities to do higher level Arts Award qualifications.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**Our Activity Programmes (Cont.)**

**Creative Interventions**

Working with Education and Youth settings to use participation in creative activities to support young people to develop confidence, creative and social skills. Young people are referred into the groups by the host partner, using criteria like high levels of school absence, mental health or behavioural challenges or inter-sectional needs.

The structure is 12 weekly 2-hour sessions with an informal sharing at the end and young people completing an Arts Award qualification.

In 2024-25, our education Creative Intervention partners were Duke's Secondary School in Ashington and Highfield Middle School in Prudhoe. Our Youth partners were YMCA Northumberland and Newcastle Carers, young adult carers group.

**Employability Skills**

In 2024-25, we delivered a programme of employability pilot work, commissioned by North of Tyne Combined Authority, focused on young people aged 16-25 in and around Ashington, Northumberland. It involved working with referral partners including Northumberland College, Duke's Secondary School and other VCSE partners.

This work is set for further development with business referral partners in the following year.

**PROGRAMME 3: Professional Theatre for young audiences (b,c,e,h,j)**

We work with professional theatre artists (writers, directors, actors, designers and production staff) to create social-change theatre that is relevant to the lives of our core beneficiaries.

**Melva Digital**

This online multi-media creative intervention programme continues to develop, with primary schools as the primary audience. The digital package supports children's, teachers' and parents' mental health education and strategies for self-management of worries and anxiety and includes:

- Digital captured version of the original stage play – in five episodes
- Online storytelling game
- Animation Series, with themes aligned to the NHS 5 Steps for mental wellbeing
- Teacher practical CPD training
- Summary Impact Report for schools

The programme will undergo a further enhancement in 2025-26 with the addition of introductory activities for key stage 1 and an illustrated novel (and audio version) for upper key stage 2 and lower key stage 3, providing a whole-school intervention approach.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**Our Activity Programmes (Cont.)**

**PROGRAMME 4: CONNECT (b,h,l)**

This is our business training programme for multi-sector organisations, which generates earned income to subsidise our delivery with young people. The CONNECT training approach combines practice from actor training and theatre rehearsals with business thought leadership and social science and neuroscience content and research.

The CONNECT programme is a hybrid model of in person and online delivery and is a fast-growing strand of our work and income stream attracting clients from multiple sectors and a variety of size and scale of businesses.

**PROGRAMME 5: Sector Development (c,d,f,g,l,j,k,n,o)**

**National Youth Theatre Development**

Together with other Arts Council NPO Youth Theatre organisations, we continue to deliver and support *Running a Youth Theatre* digital training and CPD for practitioners and companies.

Following our joint commissioning of the first national youth theatre census since 2011 during 2024-25 (published January 2025), we are now working with some of these partners on the formation of a new national development organisation for the sector.

**Cross Sector Collaboration**

We continue our collaborations with Youth Work organisations, predominantly North East Youth Alliance, supporting their workforce development aims through delivery of our training and in an advisory role supporting collaborations between Arts & Culture Organisations and Youth Work organisations.

In our place-based work, we are strongly aligned with partners in regeneration, Health and Education.

**Public Benefit**

The Trustees understand and have discussed the implications of the provisions of the Charities Act 2006, which state that all charities must demonstrate that they are established for public benefit, and have had due regard to the public benefit guidance issued by the Charity Commission. The Trustees believe that the charity meets both of the key principles.

Principle 1 - There must be an identifiable benefit, or benefits

Principle 2 - Benefit must be to the public, or a section of the public

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**Public Benefit (Cont.)**

The charity's principal public benefits are:

**1. Education and development of young people**

The charity's participatory arts activities focus on strengthening the social and emotional capabilities and mental health of young people – such things as confidence, resilience, creativity, communication, managing feelings, problem-solving, relationship-building, responsibility and perseverance, through participation in performance-based activities.

**2. Education and development of adults**

The charity delivers professional development skills workshops with adults that utilise similar approaches to those used with young people but made bespoke for the particular setting e.g. teacher CPD and masterclasses in creative leadership and managing imposter syndrome.

**3. Events and plays for the general public**

The charity runs c. 20-30 events and performances per year with its various groups, which are delivered to a high standard and directed by paid professional staff. Those in partner settings are primarily for the young people, families, and staff associated with the setting. They also use community venues and / or in regional theatre venues for performances and events such as Gosforth Civic Theatre, YMCA Northumberland and Family Hubs.

There is a safeguarding policy in place, which includes online working, and is reviewed at least annually (including a review of statutory guidance). There is a safeguarding link trustee and they, together with staff members as Designated Safeguarding Officer and a deputy, are all trained with a Level 3 Safeguarding accreditation, refreshed every 3 years.

As per our policy, we undertake the following Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and procedures:

- Ensuring that everyone who works directly and frequently (more than 3 days in any 30-day period) with children and young people under 18 on our behalf including paid employees, freelancers, volunteers or in any other capacity has an enhanced check with a children's barred list check from the DBS no more than 12 months old (including checks via the DBS update service).
- Ensuring trustees have an enhanced check from the DBS no more than 12 months old (including checks via the DBS update service)
- DBS checks are recorded, monitored and managed using our company management software.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**Public Benefit (Cont.)**

The main beneficiaries are:

- Children and young people aged 7-19 in North East England who attend our activities e.g. our Youth Theatre groups.
- Children and young people aged 7-19 in North East England who we work with in partnerships with other settings; arts, education or community organisations, including our Creative Interventions and Melva Digital programme. This includes national participants.
- Adults who participate in our work; artists and practitioners from other settings e.g. teachers and Youth Workers.
- Adults who participate in our professional development training – including national and international participants. This includes both in-person and digital participation.
- Members of the public who attend our performances and events. This includes both in-person and digital participation.

We prioritise working with beneficiaries in locations of socio-economic disadvantage and rural isolation and which are under-served by cultural provision. From our base in YMCA Northumberland in Ashington, we operate a satellite model of delivery including a secondary base in Prudhoe in west Northumberland and a growing number of residential partnerships with cross-sector partners.

**Risk Management**

The Trustees regularly review the major governance, operational and financial risks which the charity faces as part of its annual business planning process and confirm that systems have been established to mitigate these risks.

The charity has a comprehensive risk management framework. It comprises:

- an annual review of the strategic risks the charity may face via the business plan
- the establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

The charity has a comprehensive approach to risk management, comprising:

- Whole company risk register, reviewed quarterly by senior staff and the Board
- Delegation of risk management responsibilities between staff, detailed in the risk register
- The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified, reviewed by the FAR Sub-Group
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

The Trustees are satisfied that appropriate financial systems and controls and employment policies and practices are in place.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**Risk Management (Cont.)**

They consider the key risks facing the charity currently to be:

- **Competition for Grant Funding**

Competition for grant funding within the charitable, youth and arts sector remains high. While the charity received an extension of a further year (2026-27) of their Arts Council NPO funding, following a spending and impact review, the long-term future of this core funding source remains unclear.

The charity had several multi-year grant funding agreements which ended in 2024 and received rejections from previous high level grant funders (e.g. Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Children in Need), with competition for funds being cited as the reason.

The multi-stream income generation model the charity operates has maintained financial stability, with growing successes in local and regional authority commissions and earned income. The trustees recognise the need for the charity to continue to decrease its reliance on grant funding (remaining at c68% of income in 2024-25) by maximising income from other income generation streams.

- **Staffing Capacity**

Demand for the charity's services continues to increase. A new Executive Director was recruited during 2024-25, who will take up their full-time post in April 2025, increasing capacity in senior leadership and enabling the Artistic Director to provide additional support to the delivery teams.

Recruitment is scheduled for a new Producer and for further delivery staff in 2025-26.

The trustees note the scheduled maternity leave for the current Producer and Paternity leave for the Senior Administrator.

- **Escalated and changing needs of young people**

Public Health England states that in 2024, 1 in 5 children and young people between 5-16 had a diagnosable mental health condition. This has been exacerbated by the social, economic and political landscape in the UK including the cost-of-living crisis and post-pandemic legacy.

The development of our working practices with young people has resulted in us attracting and retaining higher numbers of young people with complex challenges – creating additional profound, complex and changeable challenges in our delivery contexts.

The Trustees recognise the importance of supervision and support of delivery team staff as part of the charity's duty of care to staff, alongside safeguarding the welfare of children and young people. This will be an area for further development in the coming year.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

**Overview**

The year has been another one of growth and development, with the organisation moving further into thought and practice leadership in the various sectors that we operate in and growing our reputation and influence nationally.

From a grassroots delivery perspective, we worked with more young people than ever before during the year and continued to diversify our beneficiaries through our growing digital programmes, new partnerships and refocusing of our delivery settings.

The creation of the Executive Director role within senior leadership signifies a step change for the organisation, with the new post-holder set to work alongside the Artistic Director (CEO) to drive forward the charity in the coming years. (Appointed in Jan 2025, commencing post in Apr 2025.)

Following the success of several pilot commissions in the last couple of years, the organisation is now moving into a phase of pioneering new ways of working, consciously planning activities that both meet the needs of our local community beneficiaries together with being exemplars of excellence in practice in a regional and national context.

This includes:

- Submission of a tender to Northumberland County Council to be the operator of a new cultural, arts and community venue in Ashington
- Convening multi-sector partners in Ashington to drive forward a multi year, place-based programme of activity focusing on creative health
- Recommissioning of our Melva Digital programme by North East Combined Authority, enabling its cost-free distribution to c130 schools across the region
- Testing a new model of employability skills training utilising creative participation as the core methodology, addressing a significant gap in the market

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

**Summary of the Main Achievements in the Year**

In summary, in 2024-25, the charity:

- Reached **c10,000 young people** who actively participated in our work. This includes young people participating in our weekly sessions, attending our live events and workshops, participating in our Melva programme, or participating in workshops run by external partners using our digital content and resource packs.
- Delivered creative activity directly with **c1,700 young people** through our programmes, including deep to light engagements facilitated by Mortal Fools.
- Delivered activities for young people in **46 weeks** of the year.
- Delivered **366 sessions to 230 young people** in Mortal Fools Youth Theatre, school, college & youth settings, averaging approximately **110 young people per week**
- Had audiences of **c.750 audience members** at our live performances or showcases, and a further **c.1,700 at digital screenings**
- Achieved **2.5k views** on our YouTube totaling **76.5 hours watch time** (views only counted where average is at least 1 minute+ or 90% of short form content), and engaged **c50,000 people** via our Mortal Fools digital channels
- Supported **58** young people to achieve an **Arts Award** accredited qualification.
- Created **17 short films, animations, and audio pieces** with young people.
- Engaged **c7,000 young people in our Melva Digital** programme for mental health, equating to **32,000+ engagements**, across **1,300+ sessions** delivered in **c135 schools**, supported with our CPD training with **c100 teachers** in the North East.
- **Provided 17 CPD / training sessions** for artists and producers both internally and externally.
- Delivered **52 CONNECT training interventions** and **engaged 360 training participants**.
- Contracted **24 freelance professionals** to work with us.
- Worked with six young people in paid and voluntary assistant roles.
- Was nominated for five awards: NE Youth Voice Awards; Chris Drinkwater Creative Health in Primary Schools Award 2025; NE Charity Awards (Charity of the Year); NE Culture Awards (Arts Council England Award); National Diversity Awards (Community Organisation Award: multi-strand).
- Had work featured in local and national publications including The Stage, Northern Insight Magazine, Northumberland Gazette, The Chronicle, and many other press publications.
- Maintained the following accreditations/statuses: Real Living Wage Foundation Employer, Good Work Pledge – Advanced Level, and Arts Award Trinity Champion Centre

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

**Summary of the Main Achievements in the Year (Cont.)**

The main creative projects this year were:

**Ensemble Young Company – Inevitable? Tour & Arts Award Project**

A northern tour of our new Ensemble Young Company play, *Inevitable?* performed by 11 young people from Northumberland plus 6 group members achieving their Arts Award Bronze (level 1) qualification.

*“Mortal Fools has been such a lifeline for me. It gives me a space to truly be myself and I have met the most amazing, genuine people. The way this theatre gives the young people a voice, is honestly really special.”* Ensemble Young Company Member, aged 18

*“The show was fantastic - loved the concept and the execution. So great to see a diverse range of characters and experiences on stage, filled with moments of joy and laughter as well as reflection and insight.”* *Inevitable?* Audience Member

**Ensemble Young Company – Brainstorm Production**

Co-creating and premiering a new version of Company 3's blueprint play, *Brainstorm*, with 10 young people from Northumberland.

*“My son and I loved the show, not only for the comical value, but also for the honest and heart-warming storytelling of what really goes on inside a teenager's brain...the actors on stage were a testament to the hard work of parents, carers and people who work with young people.”*  
*Brainstorm* Audience Member

**Youth Theatre – Sounding Board**

Our first *Youth Music* funded project - co-creating a series of 4 short films and a live performance event with original new music, song, and sound design composition with our 6 youth theatre groups from Ashington and the Tyne Valley. The creative work explored socially engaged themes important to the young people such as mental health and protecting the environment. Included community filming/activity days, live performance, community screenings and workshops.

*“Projects like these give young people more opportunity to try new things like music...It opens young people up to more ideas and ambitions about what they could do with their life.”* Mark, Young Trustee

*“I enjoyed feeling free to talk about how I'm feeling, more than I maybe would outside the sessions”*  
*Sounding Board* Participant

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

**Summary of the Main Achievements in the Year (Cont.)**

**Youth Theatre – *Light Up***

Two live events of micro-performances from our 4 youth theatre groups in Ashington and the Tyne Valley – inspired by the theme of 'light up'. The project used innovative lighting design, props, and installation, with the highlight being a new promenade-style immersive theatre event at Duke's Secondary School, Ashington.

*"All age groups performed with passion, insight and creativity"*

*"The small performances were really powerful and impactful. Great way to demonstrate and show emotions and challenges young people are faced with"*

*"Great range of activities and inclusive of age groups. Interactive activities helped viewers to understand / be more aware of wellbeing and mental health in a creative and fun way"*

***Light Up* Audience Members**

**Youth Theatre – *Watch This Space* R&D**

A research and development term exploring the theme of 'change' using live performance, film and audio.

**Creative Interventions: Youth**

Two projects at YMCA Northumberland, working alongside their youth work team, engaging young people in Ashington facing barriers to the arts:

- *Bandcamp* – a music and songwriting summer holidays intensive
- *Creative Mondays Light Up* – a 6-week multi arts project exploring music and visual art.

Commenced a pilot project with Newcastle Young Adult Carers developing creative provision for young people with unpredictable life circumstances.

**Creative Interventions: Education**

Two 12-week creative intervention projects in Duke's Secondary School (Ashington) and Highfield Middle School (Prudhoe) supporting young people referred because they have specific needs or challenging circumstances. The groups experimented with different creative activities, created theatre & audio pieces, presented a showcase of their work and achieved Explore Arts Awards.

*"I have loved watching [her] confidence grow. Her worries are becoming less and she has stepped out of her comfort zone. It has had a positive impact in school life"* Parent of Creative Intervention Participant

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

**Summary of the Main Achievements in the Year (Cont.)**

**Future Ready – Employability Skills**

A large-scale pilot programme (4 cohorts across 20 days) supporting young people and young adults to develop core skills and capabilities needed for success in future employment whilst supporting their needs, with referral partners Northumberland College and Duke's Secondary.

The programme used applied creative activities, mentorship with industry professionals, and wraparound support to help young people facing barriers explore their strengths and aspirations. Funded by North of Tyne Combined Authority.

*"Before Future Ready, I had no idea what I wanted to do and I didn't think I would ever be able to get a job. I felt rubbish about myself all the time and talking about myself was too hard. After my time with Mortal Fools, I felt way more confident...The week helped me decide what I'm good at and what I'm interested in. A few months ago, I went to a college open day ON MY OWN, and a few weeks later, I smashed an interview getting a place on an Early Years and Nursery course in September. It's nice to be excited about the future for once."* **Future Ready Participant**

**Melva Digital**

The programme continued to grow its user base and reputation, supported with distribution commissions totalling £116,000 from North East Combined Authority and further financial support from private business sponsors, enabling us to provide it free of charge to schools, greatly increasing accessibility of the programme.

The result of this is the engagement of **c7,000 children**, equating to **32,000+ online engagements across 1,300+ sessions**, delivered in **c135 schools**, supported with our CPD training with **c100 teachers**.

The evaluation data generated demonstrated a notable improvement in children's knowledge, understanding and recall of self-management techniques (average 80-90% improvement from baseline to end of programme assessments).

*"The day was extremely informative and insightful. It is the kind of CPD that can adapt and change the practice of the most experienced teachers for the better. It is also the kind of evidence-based training that will take us away (hopefully as far away as possible) from paper and jargon-based provisions for children with SEND/SEMH needs."* Teacher CPD Participant

During the year, work continued on the development of introductory activities for key stage 1 (to enable a whole school delivery) together with a new illustrated novel for the programme, aimed at upper key stage 2 and lower key stage 3, exploring themes of grief, loss, bereavement, transition and puberty. These are scheduled to be added to the programme from September 2025.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

**Summary of the Main Achievements in the Year (Cont.)**

**Other Opportunities For Young People**

**Peer Facilitators**

We continued to mentor and support 6 young assistants in voluntary and paid roles helping run our younger youth theatre groups and support events. These roles have provided an entry route into casual creative employment and volunteering for young people from our youth theatre and provided excellent role models for our younger members.

We also continued to support two young trustees who are ex members of our youth theatre.

We have delivered **creative outreach sessions** with organisations including:

- Ashington Town Council (Pride Picnic, Family Day, Market Day Pop-Ups, Christmas Lights switch on)
- Hirst Welfare Centre
- Ashington Family Hub
- Northumberland College
- Pride Action North
- North East Youth Alliance
- NCEA Duke's Secondary School, Ashington

We **distributed digital content (films & resource packs)** to a further 30+ settings which hosted screenings and workshops (schools, colleges, youth work settings, arts organisations).

**PARTNERSHIPS**

**Local Authority & Strategic:**

- **North of Tyne Combined Authority** – several commissions secured, as detailed above.
- **Northumberland Cultural Education Partnership (NCEP)**
- **Creative Health** networks and initiatives  
This is a growing area of work nationally – including the formation of a new APPG for Creative Health in November 2024 - recognising the profound impact that creative participation can have on people's health and wellbeing.
- **Ashington Town Council** – local funding support, contribution to their community events and advocacy.
- **Youth Theatre Together** – *the new brand name for the collaboration of Youth Theatre NPOs detailed earlier in the report, working towards the formation of a new national development organisation*

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

**Summary of the Main Achievements in the Year (Cont.)**

**Partnerships (Cont.)**

**Voluntary Sector and Community-Based:**

- **North East Youth Alliance** – contributions to their conferences, commissioned workforce development training, activities, and membership of their Culture and Youth partnerships steering group.
- **YMCA Northumberland** – *co-delivery of music-based intervention projects*
- **Newcastle Carers** – *piloting an intervention with their young adult carers*
- **NCVA and Hirst Masterplan** – *community engagement and consultation using creative participation as the core mechanism*

**PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS**

The charity is expected to grow further in the coming year, including the expansion of the staff team, an increase in the participatory groups and the growth of beneficiary numbers.

**Place-based working** continues to be a key strategic focus, including localised work in our hometown of Ashington, county-wide and region-wide initiatives and growing our sector development work and profile nationally.

Key **Local Developments** are:

- The creation of new participatory groups for young people and families in Ashington in response to local demand
- A move into new office premises – supporting the growth of the team and providing an operational base that is more fit for purpose
- The development of relationships with new community buildings for delivery of our young people's activities e.g. Hirst Welfare Centre and Family Hubs – rooting our delivery in the heart of the local community
- Place-based partnership programme development – collaborative delivery of creative activities with multi-sector local partners, including education, health, regeneration and other VCSE organisations – with a Creative Health focus – including an application to Arts Council England Place Partnerships Fund.
- The pursuit of a cultural community hub building at Wansbeck Square – next to the newly opened railway station on the Northumberland Line – together with the local authority and other VCSE partners.

Key **National Developments** are:

- Working with other Youth Theatre Arts Council NPO partners to:
  - deliver a national youth theatre development training and consultancy gathering – named *Youth Theatre Together*
  - work towards the formation of a new development organisation / agency for youth theatres nationally
  - continue to deliver the *Running a Youth Theatre* programme of digital training nationally

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS (CONTINUED)**

**Business Development**

There are several focus areas of this work, including:

- Newly appointed Executive Director starts role in April 2025, supporting business leadership and development, including income generation and national profile development
- Existing roles to be refocused and streamlined to support efficiency and next growth phase
- Recruitment to support additional Producing capacity to manage growing portfolio of programmes and delivery team staff.
- Launching a new **Digital Strategy** to include a fit-for-purpose website, digital engagement and content creation plans for the coming years.
- **Income generation** – continuing to increase financial resilience with diversification and growth of earned income streams.

For **Melva Digital**, this means:

- A recommission from the North East Combined Authority supporting region-wide distribution.
- Pursuing other commissions nationally by profiling the programmes as an exemplar creative health programme through national conferences and networks
- Developing the Melva programme systems so it can accommodate delivery at scale
- Expanding the creative portfolio to support a whole-school delivery approach

For **CONNECT Training Programme**, this means:

- Growing the delivery team.
- Building new multi-year client relationships
- Refresh of content menu in response to market needs
- Growing the profile through presence at key conferences, events etc

We will also develop our internal **Wellbeing Practice Guide and Toolkit** into a saleable web-based app, designed for settings working with children and young people.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2025*

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES**

The Trustees (who are also the Directors of Mortal Fools for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

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

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

Signed on behalf of the Trustees



**Richard Wise**  
**Trustee**  
**15 September 2025**

# **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS ON THE UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS OF MORTAL FOOLS LIMITED YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

I hereby report to the Trustees of Mortal Fools (Charity Registration Number 1153400) on my examination of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 set out on pages 26 to 41.

## **Responsibilities and Basis of Report**

As the charity's Trustees (and also its directors for the purposes of company law), you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

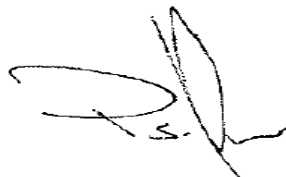
## **Independent Examiner's Statement**

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000, your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountant in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods or principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102)).

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.



**Pete O'Hara, FCA, Chartered Accountant**  
**Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales**  
26 La Sagesse, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 3AF

15 September 2025

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
<b>Income</b>					
Income from Investments	3	5,035	-	5,035	5,392
Income from Charitable Activities	4	405,062	180,955	586,017	555,757
Income from Donations & Legacies	5	4,480	-	4,480	9,375
Other Income	6	24,814	-	24,814	22,265
		<b>439,391</b>	<b>180,955</b>	<b>620,346</b>	<b>592,789</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Expenditure on Charitable Activities	7	438,707	217,065	655,772	610,792
		<b>438,707</b>	<b>217,065</b>	<b>655,772</b>	<b>610,792</b>
<b>Net Income/(Expenditure)</b>		<b>684</b>	<b>(36,110)</b>	<b>(35,426)</b>	<b>(18,003)</b>
Balance brought forward		209,256	162,185	371,441	389,444
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>£209,940</b>	<b>£126,075</b>	<b>£336,015</b>	<b>£371,441</b>

The notes on pages 28 to 41 form part of the financial statements.

All of the activities of the company are classed as continuing.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION/BALANCE SHEET**  
**AS AT 31 MARCH 2025**

	Notes	31 March 2025 £	31 March 2024 £
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Tangible Fixed Assets	10	1,930	2,572
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Debtors	11	13,761	104,501
Cash At Bank & In Hand		348,096	293,103
		<u>361,857</u>	<u>397,604</u>
<b>Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year</b>	12	(27,772)	(28,735)
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)		<u>334,085</u>	<u>368,869</u>
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	13	<u><b>£336,015</b></u>	<u><b>£371,441</b></u>
<b>Represented by:</b>			
Unrestricted Reserves	14	209,940	209,256
Restricted Reserves	14	126,075	162,185
		<u><b>£336,015</b></u>	<u><b>£371,441</b></u>

The notes on pages 28 to 41 form part of the financial statements.

The Trustees are satisfied that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the charity was entitled to exemption under section 477(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees also confirm that the Members have not required the charity to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

(i) ensuring that the charity keeps adequate accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act, and

(ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charity.

**These financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 15 September 2025 and signed on their behalf:**



**Richard Wise**  
**Trustee**  
**Company Registration Number 08102487**

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**1. Accounting Policies**

**Basis of Preparation**

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable United Kingdom accounting standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 – 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland' ('FRS 102'), and with the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, modified to include certain financial instruments at fair value.

Advantage has been taken of the provisions in the SORP for Charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a statement of cashflows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity.

**Income**

All income is included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income, any performance related conditions attached have been met or are fully within the control of the charity, the income is considered probable and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Donations and legacy income is received by way of donations, legacies, grants and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Where legacies have been notified to the charity but the criteria for income recognition have not been met, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.
- Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.
- Investment income is included when receivable.
- Income from charitable trading activity is accounted for when earned.
- Other income is accounted for when receivable.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**1. Accounting Policies (Continued)**

**Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:

- Costs of raising funds comprise the costs associated with attracting donations, grants and legacies and the costs of trading for fundraising purposes.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
- Other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

**Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation**

Depreciation is provided on any fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the assets over their remaining useful lives as follows:

- IT Equipment - 33% per annum straight line
- Office Equipment – 25% per annum straight line

A full year's depreciation charge is applied in the year of acquisition and no charge is made in the year of disposal.

**Impairment of Fixed Assets**

A review for indicators of impairment is carried out at each reporting date, with the recoverable amount being estimated where such indicators exist. Where the carrying value exceeds the recoverable amount, the asset is impaired accordingly. Prior impairments are also reviewed for possible reversal at each reporting date.

**Financial Instruments**

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the charity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs.

Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted.

Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost where there is a material adjustment.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**1. Accounting Policies (Continued)**

**Fund Accounting**

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the purposes of the charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for specific purposes.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

**Taxation Status**

Mortal Fools is a Charity registered under the 1960 Charities Act and is accorded exemption from liability to taxation on its income under S505 Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988.

**Going Concern**

There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

**Judgements and Key Sources of Estimation Uncertainty**

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

There are no significant judgements or estimation uncertainty included within the financial statements.

**2. Legal Status**

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.

**3. Income from Investments**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Interest on cash deposits	5,035	-	5,035	5,392
	<b>£5,035</b>	<b>£-</b>	<b>£5,035</b>	<b>£5,392</b>

The 2024 total of £5,392 relates wholly to Unrestricted Funds.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**4. Income from Charitable Activities**

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
<b>Grant Income</b>				
The 1989 Willan Charitable Trust at the CFTWN	-	-	-	10,000
Appletree Fund at the CFTWN	-	4,995	4,995	-
Arts Council England: National Portfolio Organisation (NPO)	180,000	-	180,000	180,000
Asda Foundation	-	1,200	1,200	294
Ashington Community Development Trust at the CFTWN	-	-	-	10,000
Ashington Town Council	-	2,000	2,000	5,000
BBC Children In Need	-	30,070	30,070	29,370
Carroll Savage Fund at the CFTWN	-	-	-	2,500
The Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust	-	500	500	-
Co-op Local Community Fund	-	500	500	-
Culture Bridge North East: Partnership Investment	-	(2,000)	(2,000)	-
Curtin PARP Fund at the CFTWN	-	544	544	-
The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust	-	4,000	4,000	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	-	-	25,000
Hadrian Trust	-	1,000	1,000	-
Hays Travel Foundation	-	4,000	4,000	-
Northumberland High Sheriff Awards at the CFTWN	-	1,250	1,250	1,000
The Joicey Trust	-	-	-	2,000
Kavli Trust	-	91,543	91,543	52,789
Linden Family Fund at the CFTWN	-	-	-	5,000
Muckle LLP at the CFTWN	-	2,550	2,550	1,000
Newcastle City Council TWAM – LCEP	-	10,400	10,400	10,000
North of Tyne Combined Authority: Small Grant Programme	-	-	-	49,598
North of Tyne Combined Authority: Inspire	-	-	-	20,000
Northumberland Children's Trust	-	5,000	5,000	5,000
Northumberland County Council: Cultural Investment Portfolio	-	8,748	8,748	8,748
Northumberland County Council: Cultural Investment Project	-	-	-	5,000
Northumberland County Council: Community Chest Scheme	-	4,900	4,900	-

Continued overleaf...

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**4. Income from Charitable Activities (Cont.)**

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
<b>Grant Income (Cont.)</b>				
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	-	-	-	6,000
Postcode Community Trust	50,000	-	50,000	-
Ridley Family Charity	-	5,000	5,000	-
Robert Wood Trust at the CFTWN	-	-	-	2,000
The Rothley Trust	-	1,000	1,000	-
Sir James Knott Trust	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
The Sylvia Waddilove Trust	-	1,000	1,000	-
Wide Open Road Fund at the CFTWN	-	2,000	2,000	-
Youth Music Trailblazer Fund	-	-	-	23,280
Promise Awards – World Youth Clubs	-	755	755	-
	<b>240,000</b>	<b>180,955</b>	<b>420,955</b>	<b>463,579</b>
<b>Earned Income</b>				
Box Office Takings	1,788	-	1,788	1,596
Drama Session Fees	5,950	-	5,950	11,389
Partner Contributions	15,510	-	15,510	14,238
Refreshment & Other Sundry Sales	583	-	583	1,110
Statutory Contract Income	116,000	-	116,000	36,874
Training Fees	25,231	-	25,231	26,971
	<b>165,062</b>	<b>180,955</b>	<b>165,062</b>	<b>92,178</b>
	<b>£405,062</b>	<b>£180,955</b>	<b>£586,017</b>	<b>£555,757</b>

Of the 2024 total of £555,757, £307,178 relates to Unrestricted Funds and £248,579 to Restricted Funds.

**5. Income from Donations & Legacies**

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Donations & Gift Aid	4,480	-	4,480	4,875
Donation In Kind	-	-	-	4,500
	<b>£4,480</b>	<b>£-</b>	<b>£4,480</b>	<b>£9,375</b>

The 2024 total of £9,375 relates wholly to Unrestricted Funds.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**6. Other Income**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	£	£	£	£
Theatre Tax Relief	24,814	-	24,814	22,265
	<b>£24,814</b>	<b>£-</b>	<b>24,814</b>	<b>£22,265</b>

The 2024 total of £22,265 relates wholly to Unrestricted Funds.

**7. Total Expenditure on Charitable Activities**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	£	£	£	£
<b>Production &amp; Activity Costs</b>				
Salaries & On Costs	340,029	143,701	483,730	422,780
Freelance Project Worker Fees	11,751	18,668	30,419	36,088
Production, Hire & Staging Costs	19,927	11,871	31,798	27,683
Design, Print & Promotional Materials	20,830	11,192	32,022	37,724
	<b>392,537</b>	<b>185,432</b>	<b>577,969</b>	<b>524,275</b>
<b>Support Costs</b>				
Administrative Costs	38,379	14,308	52,687	50,940
Consultancy Fees	938	4,200	5,138	5,027
Staff Training	1,805	704	2,509	6,343
Depreciation	275	2,907	3,182	10,553
Website Development	-	9,114	9,114	9,350
	<b>41,397</b>	<b>31,233</b>	<b>72,630</b>	<b>82,213</b>
<b>Governance Costs</b>				
Accountancy & Payroll Fees	2,480	400	2,880	2,857
Board Costs	-	-	-	650
Legal & Professional	2,293	-	2,293	797
	<b>4,773</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>5,173</b>	<b>4,304</b>
	<b>£438,707</b>	<b>£217,065</b>	<b>£655,772</b>	<b>£610,792</b>

Of the 2024 total of £610,792, £274,428 relates to Unrestricted Funds and £336,364 to Restricted Funds.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**8. Net Movement in Funds**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	£	£
The net movement in Funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Depreciation of Owned Fixed Assets	3,182	10,553
Independent Examiner's Fees – Independent Examination	900	900
Independent Examiner's Fees – Other Services	540	300

**9. Staff Costs & Directors' Remuneration**

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	£	£
Gross Salary Costs	436,967	383,743
Employer's National Insurance	33,926	28,132
Employer's Pension Contributions	12,837	10,905
	<b>£483,730</b>	<b>£422,780</b>

No employee received remuneration of more than £60,000 during the year (2024: Nil).

The average number of staff employed during the year, calculated as full-time equivalents, was as follows:

	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	No.	No.
Artistic Production and Support	13.5	13

No remuneration was paid to any Trustees in the year.

No travel and subsistence expenses were reimbursed to Trustees in respect of their attendance at meetings of the charity (2024: £Nil).

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**10. Tangible Fixed Assets**

	<b>IT &amp; Office Equipment £</b>	<b>Total Fixed Assets £</b>
<b>Cost</b>		
At 1 April 2024	37,197	37,197
Additions in year	2,630	2,630
Disposals	(1,473)	(1,473)
At 31 March 2025	38,354	38,354
<b>Accumulated Depreciation</b>		
At 1 April 2024	34,625	34,625
Charge for year	3,182	3,182
Disposals	(1,383)	(1,383)
At 31 March 2025	36,424	36,424
<b>Net Book Value</b>		
At 31 March 2025	<b>£1,930</b>	<b>£1,930</b>
At 1 April 2024	£2,572	£2,572

**11. Debtors**

	<b>2025 £</b>	<b>2024 £</b>
Trade Debtors	1,625	5,300
Other Debtors	-	5,000
Accrued Income	7,853	90,749
Prepayments	4,283	3,452
	<b>£13,761</b>	<b>£104,501</b>

All sums are due within 1 year.

**12. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year**

	<b>2025 £</b>	<b>2024 £</b>
Trade Creditors	10,061	12,512
Other Taxes & Social Security Costs	8,928	8,859
Other Creditors - Pension Contributions Due	-	1,700
Income Received In Advance	1,300	1,100
Other Creditors	-	40
Accruals	7,482	4,524
	<b>£27,772</b>	<b>£28,735</b>

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**13. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Fixed Assets	562	1,368	1,930	2,572
Debtors	8,838	4,923	13,761	104,501
Cash at Bank and In Hand	224,556	123,540	348,096	293,103
Creditors – Due Within 1 Year	(24,016)	(3,756)	(27,772)	(28,735)
	<b>£209,940</b>	<b>£126,075</b>	<b>£336,015</b>	<b>£371,441</b>

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**14. Analysis of Charitable Funds**

	Fund at 1 April 2024 £	Income in Year £	Expenditure in Year £	Fund at 31 March 2025 £
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>				
Charity General Fund	209,256	439,391	(438,707)	209,940
<b>Restricted Funds</b>				
1989 Willan Charitable Trust at the CFTWN	6,908	-	(6,908)	-
Appletree Fund at the CFTWN	-	4,995	(1,328)	3,667
Asda Foundation	-	1,200	(1,200)	-
Ashington Town Council	-	2,000	(2,000)	-
BBC Children In Need	-	30,070	(30,070)	-
The Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust	-	500	(500)	-
Co-op Local Community Fund	-	500	-	500
Culture Bridge North East: Capacity Building	5,000	-	-	5,000
Culture Bridge North East: Partnership Investment	17,042	(2,000)	(1,515)	13,527
Curtin PARP Fund at the CFTWN	-	544	(410)	134
DCMS Youth Investment Fund	192	-	(96)	96
The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust	-	4,000	-	4,000
Hadrian Trust	-	1,000	(1,000)	-
Hays Travel Foundation	-	4,000	(4,000)	-
Northumberland High Sheriff Awards at the CFTWN	1,000	1,250	(2,250)	-
The Joicey Trust	2,000	-	(2,000)	-
Kavli Trust	45,343	91,543	(50,236)	86,650
Muckle LLP at the CFTWN	-	2,550	(2,550)	-

Continued overleaf...

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**14. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)**

	Fund at 1 April 2024 £	Income in Year £	Expenditure in Year £	Fund at 31 March 2025 £
Newcastle City Council TWAM: LCEP	7,530	10,400	(13,249)	4,681
North of Tyne Combined Authority: Inspire	7,360	-	(7,360)	-
North of Tyne Combined Authority: Small Grant Programme	49,598	-	(49,598)	-
Northumberland Children's Trust	-	5,000	(5,000)	-
Northumberland County Council: Cultural Investment Portfolio	-	8,748	(8,748)	-
Northumberland County Council: Community Chest Scheme	1,858	4,900	(1,858)	4,900
Northumberland County Council: Cultural Investment Project	2,342	-	(2,342)	-
Northumberland Public Health: Creative Northumberland	1,648	-	-	1,648
Ridley Family Charity	184	5,000	(3,912)	1,272
The Rothley Trust	-	1,000	(1,000)	-
The Sylvia Waddilove Trust	-	1,000	(1,000)	-
Wide Open Road Fund at the CFTWN	-	2,000	(2,000)	-
Promise Awards – World Youth Clubs	-	755	(755)	-
Youth Music Trailblazer Fund	14,180	-	(14,180)	-
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>162,185</b>	<b>180,955</b>	<b>(217,065)</b>	<b>126,075</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>£371,441</b>	<b>£620,346</b>	<b>£(655,772)</b>	<b>£336,015</b>



**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

**14. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)**

Name of Restricted Fund	Purpose & Allocation of the Restricted Fund
<b>Project-Specific Funds</b>	
<i>Muckle at the CFTWN</i>	Towards the cost of providing Melva licenses, to support pupils' mental health and wellbeing.
<i>Culture Bridge North East Partnership Funding / Northumberland Public Health / Newcastle City Council TWAM (North East Museums)</i>	Towards the cost of <i>Creative Northumberland</i> , a collaborative project between schools and cultural organisations testing the impact of cultural activity on wellbeing. Mortal Fools are acting as budget holders for this project on behalf of the <a href="#">Northumberland LCEP</a> .
<i>ASDA Foundation / Hays Travel Foundation / The Sylvia Waddilove Trust / Appletree Fund &amp; Wide Open Road Fund, both at the CFTWN</i>	Towards project costs associated with running our regular youth theatre groups for Young People in Ashington
<i>Northumberland High Sheriff at the CFTWN / N'land CC: Cultural Investment Project / The Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust / Promise Awards – World Youth Clubs</i>	Towards the cost of running Ensemble sessions with young people aged 13-19 in Ashington and surrounding areas.
<i>Culture Bridge North East: Capacity Building</i>	To fund a dedicated Producer for <i>Creative Northumberland (Northumberland LCEP)</i>
<i>Youth Music Trailblazer Fund</i>	Towards the costs of piloting new approaches to music making across all of our Mortal Fools Youth Theatre groups and outreach groups.
<i>The Rothley Trust</i>	Towards resources and creative equipment to support delivery of youth theatre programmes.
<i>North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA): Small Grants Programme. Commissioned by North East Combined Authority funded by the UK government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.</i>	Funding for 'Future Ready' - our pilot employability skills project supporting economically inactive and/or socially isolated young people aged 16-30 in Northumberland.
<i>NTCA: Inspire Project</i>	Towards the cost of developing new wellbeing education content for the Melva programme.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025***

**15. Related Party Transactions**

There were no related party transactions during this year.

**16. Taxation**

The company is a registered charity and no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

**17. Financial Commitments**

No material financial commitments have been made in respect of future financial years.

**18. Company Limited by Guarantee**

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

There are currently 11 members of the company (2024: 11).

**MORTAL FOOLS**

England & Wales - Charity number 1153400

---

# Accounts

---

Company Registration Number 08102487

Registered Charity Number 1153400

# **MORTAL FOOLS**

(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

## **REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**

**For the year ending 31 March 2024**



**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**NOTE FROM THE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES**

Mortal Fools has successfully navigated a year that has been beset with economic uncertainty, continued political upheaval and ever more complex procurement challenges. Our primary objectives have been achieved and our reach has extended to a larger number and more diverse group of young people. We have continued to co-create high calibre artistic work and sustained our focus on the quality of our output and programme content.

Our growth over recent years has demanded more effort than ever from the senior team, to ensure that content and delivery is consistent across all we do. Structures within the organisation have continued to improve, so that the tone of voice and ownership cascades beyond leadership. We do, however, remain heavily reliant on the tenacity, appetite and at times the sheer determination of this team and the Board of Trustees to maintain our success.

It is evident that this investment has improved ownership and pride at all levels within Mortal Fools. Whole company away days have been extremely well received and the Board attendance where feasible appreciated. This along with internal policy reviews has enabled us to react to the pressures we all face and maintain good levels of staff morale and wellbeing, as well as on rare occurrences challenge unacceptable behaviours in a fair and equitable way. We continue to provide unrivalled working conditions in line with the real living wage in what remains a difficult climate.

Throughout 2023/24 we continued to mature and increased our impact while managing the budget. The contribution to the Board from our younger Board members has been refreshing, and our Board recruitment drive has seen the depth, breadth, and skill base of our Trustees increase. This along with the establishment of subgroups prepared us well to meet the challenges of the year effectively.

It would belittle our effort to say this year has been about consolidation and fine tuning the organisation. The efforts have at times been seismic and as anticipated the comfort of obtaining multiyear funding, particularly our first full year as an Arts Council England regularly funded National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) has brought a different dynamic and significant pressures to bear on the organisation. These were anticipated and well prepared for, but as with all new endeavours there has been a hiatus of activity required to dovetail ACE's systems and information demands into our own.

The shift to seeking multi-year funding was always our ambition and is undoubtedly right for Mortal Fools. The funding cycles are however further apart, funds are tighter and competition greater than ever, so the hard knocks feel harder when they land. We have always resisted total reliance on NPO funding as this would stymie growth and make us over cautious in our ambitions beyond the boundary of that funding. It is therefore critical that the funding regimes are sustained.

We have continued to create some new substantive posts and increased some core team members' working hours. This has improved our capacity and enabled us to maintain a high-quality of service and reach, while securing our financial position. At times the pace has felt relentless and reflects the need for some further strategic recruitment to support the next steps. This will free up our senior team to focus on their strengths, to increase our reach and impact and make our content second to none. To do this we are looking to recruit an Executive Director by January 2025.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**NOTE FROM THE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES (CONTINUED)**

The national economic situation has remained stagnant, and the upcoming budget is an unknown but will be presented against the backdrop of funding shortfalls in all sectors of government and a 'broken NHS'. The money markets are more volatile than ever, but inflation is now back within the desired target and interest rates may begin to reduce. But these shafts of hope will not greatly impact the realities of the lives we strive to support. The real cost of living still goes up.

The health of the nation seems to be the new focus and there does appear to be a greater understand of a holistic approach to health and a focus on the fundamentals of access to effective education, healthier living, emotional wellbeing and improved diets. Mental healthcare is thankfully no longer seen as a fringe activity and prevention is now being recognised as an economic necessity rather than a nice to do. This aligns more than ever to the core ambitions of Mortal Fools reinforcing the continued relevance of what we do.

This is our third year in Ashington and has undoubtedly spread our impact further. We have maintained our delivery in Tyne Valley and our reach beyond Northumberland is increasing. The digital content we have created around the Melva programme had played a big part in this. Our ultimate ambition is still to operate from our own purpose-built premises which does slowly get ever closer to reality.

On behalf of the Board and beneficiaries, I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the team and its leadership for another excellent year.



Richard Wise, Chair of Trustees

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

The Trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year to 31 March 2024.

**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

<b>Registered charity name</b>	Mortal Fools
<b>Charity registration number</b>	1153400
<b>Company registration number</b>	08102487
<b>Registered office</b>	YMCA Northumberland, North View, Ashington, NE63 9XQ

**Trustees**

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

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

Mr R Wise (Chair)	
Mrs R A K Barclay	Resigned 11 December 2023
Mrs K Crawley	Appointed 17 June 2024
Mr P Douglas	Resigned 26 September 2024
Mr M Gate	Appointed 1 July 2023
Mrs L Jobson	Appointed 11 December 2023
Ms N Leyden	Appointed 25 September 2023
Mrs K Martin	Appointed 18 March 2024
Ms R Pattinson	
Mr S Rutherford-Orrock	Appointed 25 September 2023
Miss M Saunders	Appointed 26 June 2023
Ms S Spencer	
Miss K Stanforth	

**Company Secretary** Ms S Allen

**Bankers** Triodos Bank, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AS

**Independent Examiner** Mr P O'Hara FCA, Chartered Accountant, 26 La Sagesse, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 3AF

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

**Governing Documents**

Mortal Fools is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 12 June 2012, as Northern Arts Enterprises Limited, and registered as a charity on 14 August 2013.

It was established under the Memorandum of Association that established its objects and powers and is governed under its Articles of Association, as amended by special resolutions registered at Companies House on 5 July 2012, 3 September 2012, 8 August 2013, 12 May 2016, 22 February 2018, 1 December 2020 and 28 February 2022.

The Directors of the company are also Trustees of the charity.

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

**Charitable Purpose**

Mortal Fools charitable objects are for the benefit of the public particularly but not exclusively in the north of England, through the teaching, practice and showcasing of the arts in all their forms:

- (1) To help children and young people develop their skills, capacity and capabilities to enable them to participate fully in society as responsible, mature and fulfilled individuals;
- (2) To advance the mental health education of children, young people, their significant adults and the general public to improve mental wellbeing;
- (3) To promote, support and improve the social inclusion of children and young people who are socially excluded by providing them with opportunities to access activities and develop their skills and experiences in such a way that they are better able to participate more fully in society;

For the purposes of this clause 'socially excluded' means children and young people (up to aged 25) who are excluded from society, or parts of society (like social circles) as a result of one or more of the following factors: socio-economic circumstances; race; gender; poor educational or skills attainment; mental health; disability; bullying and harassment and ethnic origin.

- (4) To maintain, improve, and advance arts education of children and young people, professional artists and the general public.

**Board Structure & Operation**

The charity currently has eleven Trustees, having undertaken a public recruitment drive to bring new professional expertise and relevant lived experience to the Board. Trustees have participated in governance development through external training, including Anti-Racism, LGBTQIA+ Awareness and Safeguarding.

The full Board meets quarterly, has at least one additional full away day for strategic planning with leadership team staff and participates in a company development day with the whole staff team.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)**

**Board Structure & Operation (Cont.)**

For accessibility and inclusivity, regular Board meetings are offered as hybrid – with some folks meeting in person and some dialing in via Zoom. The charity invested in technical conferencing equipment to make these meetings as high quality as possible.

Three Sub-Groups meet quarterly – usually online – between full Board meetings. They are a combination of leadership team staff members and trustees. The current Sub-Groups are:

- Finance, Audit and Risk (FAR) group - financial management, company risk register, business planning / operations, legal compliance.
- Artistic, Delivery & Practice (ADP) group – creative programme development, delivery practice, multi-sector partnerships, safeguarding.
- People group – HR, EDI and company culture, Ethical Business Practices.

Minutes are taken from all Sub-Group meetings.

For all full Board meetings, an agenda, detailed written business reports and specific subject papers are prepared by senior staff and circulated to trustees in advance of Board meetings, integrating notes from sub-group meetings.

The charity has almost filled the number of trustees allowed within its current governing document. To accommodate a greater number of young people as trustees (18-25), in 2024-25, the charity will amend the governing document to allow this.

The additional focus for Board recruitment in the next year is to increase professional representation from Legal, Finance and Health backgrounds.

**Appointment and Induction of Trustees**

Trustees are recruited via a combination of open advertising and contacts via personal and professional networks. In all cases, Trustees are elected to the Board following the same process:

- Submission of an application letter and CV
- Interview by two Trustees (considering skills, experience, alignment with company values, gaps within current governance)
- Opportunity to observe a Board meeting and a meeting with Chair of trustees and CEO
- Recommendation of appointment to full Board and appointment at general meeting

New Trustees are inducted by other trustees and senior staff. The Trustee Induction Pack will be reviewed and updated in 2024-25. It includes a range of resources to support newcomers' understanding of their role and the charity's activities, and signposting to training by external providers, with the Company covering any costs associated with the training.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)**

**Reserves Policy**

The Trustees have reviewed the charity's needs for reserves in line with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission.

The Trustees aim to hold a level of Unrestricted Reserves which enables the charity to have sufficient financial resources to meet various liabilities which would occur if Mortal Fools were unable to continue operating, together with an allowance to enable the charity to respond flexibly to issues or appropriate initiatives which might be identified outside of its annual budgeting process.

At present, the Trustees estimate that the Unrestricted Reserves required to cover all known liabilities for a period of 3 months amounts to approximately £135,000 and that this should be the minimum Free Reserves Target held in the accounts. The Trustees recognise that these liabilities will increase as the charity continues to grow.

Mortal Fools currently holds total Unrestricted Reserves of £209,256 at 31 March 2024.

'Free Reserves', defined as total non-designated Unrestricted Funds minus the value of unrestricted Tangible Fixed Assets, are £208,916.

Although this exceeds the minimum target level at 31 March 2024, the Trustees have committed £30,000 of Unrestricted Reserves to be spent on Youth Theatre delivery costs in the first quarter of 2024/25. Additionally, another £40,000 of Unrestricted Reserves has been ringfenced towards initial salary costs of a new senior post to support the charity's long-term strategic development aims. Recruitment for this position is planned for late 2024/25 with a prospective start date early in 2025/26.

This ringfencing leaves a balance of £138,916 unallocated Unrestricted Reserves, which is close to target level.

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

**Grant-making**

The charity does not currently engage in grant-making activity.

**Contribution of Volunteers**

The charity makes limited use of volunteers within its productions and to support its activities.

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

**Aims & Objectives**

Mortal Fools' core purpose is to support people to have better quality inter-personal relationships with one another – as a fundamental component of wellbeing – and to use participation in creative and performance-based activities as the methodology to achieve this.

We specialise in the co-creation of compelling, dynamic, socially-relevant and high-quality creative and performance-based work with children, young people and communities.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**Aims & Objectives (Cont.)**

We work with 1,000s of children and young people every year, mostly in the North East. We develop our skills, knowledge and approach through dynamic multi-sector partnerships (Youth, Community, Health, Education, and Arts and Culture), jointly co-designing work to meet the contemporary needs of children and young people.

We are champions of theatre and performance produced by young people and for young people. We advocate for this work to be recognised and supported as an important art form in our sector, touring our work nationally, supporting participatory artists to train in co-creation, and embedding the achievement of positive wellbeing outcomes across all our work.

Utilising digital technology for engagement of beneficiaries and to share our work with more diverse audiences continues to be a great success and will continue to form a core part of our work.

**WHY we do what we do**

We are a purpose-driven organisation. Our work must be relevant to and matter in wider society and make a demonstrable and measurable difference to those we work with.

We recognise that the presence of positive and secure interpersonal relationships is a key factor in personal wellbeing, motivation, civil engagement and life fulfilment. We use drama and theatre-based approaches – interpersonal by nature – to support people to build the skills and knowledge to form and maintain better relationships. This work is positive action against the shift towards the divided, competitive and aggressive societal changes seen in the UK and wider world in recent years.

Through all our work we advocate for, demonstrate and give people ways to form better relationships and learn how positive connection and shared positive experiences with one another can be used to prevent those things which drive us apart. Positive mental health and wellbeing outcomes are an integral part of our work. We use the ratified PERMA™ Framework as our approach to planning, monitoring and evaluating the impact of our work on wellbeing outcomes.

Our work helps people to bring about changes in behaviour and outlook, increasing in confidence, experiencing personal accomplishment, building their personal resilience, shaping a more positive self-image and setting themselves up for a more positive future.

**HOW we work**

We use high-quality drama and the process of making and performing theatre-based work as our primary tools for change. Our work explores contemporary concerns facing children and young people and the realities of the world we're living in right now – inviting positive change.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**We have 4 key values that shape everything we do:**

**1. CONTRIBUTING - *Everyone Matters***

Co-creation is at the centre of everything we do. All our team and everyone we work with contributes to shaping our programmes and our activities, helping us to learn and make an impact.

Our activities are participatory, with ideas being supported, acted upon and recognised from all involved. Our activities are an asset in the lives of the people we work with, making a positive contribution and influence in both grassroots and strategic multi-sector settings.

We consistently evaluate our work so we remain relevant to wider society and make a tangible positive contribution.

**2. GROWING - *Becoming more***

We are bold, ambitious and entrepreneurial. We embrace challenges and are not afraid of failure. We champion a *growth mindset* and constantly look to learn from others. We are committed to continuous reflection and development, supporting everyone with the right level of challenge to become more.

We receive feedback graciously and gratefully and use supportive and constructive ways to give and respond to feedback.

**3. WITH OTHERS - *Better Together***

Our activities bring people together – to achieve, to learn and to have fun – with curiosity, co-creation and kindness at the heart of everything we do. We seek out people to work with who know things that we do not, integrating ongoing input from our beneficiaries, artists and others we work with or whose work relates to our own. We prioritise working with partners who share our values and whose work has similar motivations.

We support the development of key interpersonal skills like empathy, teamwork and resilience for all who work with us. We care for one another, and this compassion helps us to build strong, lasting and fruitful relationships.

**4. AS OURSELVES - *Always authentic***

We create safe spaces which support and encourage everyone to be their authentic, imperfect selves - with individual strengths, vulnerabilities, lived experiences, emotions and needs. We recognise, respect and embrace our differences, understanding that this makes us all stronger, more empathetic and wiser.

We strive to meet the needs of everyone we work with, making sure our company is welcoming and inclusive to people from all walks of life. We create environments that are genuinely supportive and accessible, where everyone feels valued as an individual, and is enabled to contribute.

As a company, we do not copy or try to compete with others. We confidently walk our own path, and we seek to work with those who also value authenticity and openness.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**WHAT we do**

We have several programmes of activity. Each of them achieves a combination of the following objectives:

- Enable children and young people to co-create with professional artists, treating young people as artists in their own right.
- Inspire people to make positive behavioural change through dynamic youth-led theatre productions, short films, creative digital assets and workshops.
- Learn through working with multi-sector organisations, schools, individuals, and artists who share our values.
- Co-construct drama and theatre-based approaches which enrich the provision within formal education settings, including training teachers and improve the personal, social, and educational outcomes of pupils.
- Make dynamic, engaging, and relevant contemporary theatre for young audiences, especially those who are under-served.
  
- Programme exciting theatre by other companies and artists – prioritise bringing this to under-served settings.
- Raise the profile of artistic work produced by young people.
- Improve mental health and wellbeing of beneficiaries and embed this at all stages of projects.
- Embody and champion inclusive approaches to co-creation, collaboration and creativity including providing a broad range of activities, working in-person and digitally designed to accommodate a range of access needs (e.g. special educational needs, logistical, age-specific, low cost).
- Reduce barriers to taking part by using in-person and digital engagement and producing our work in a range of settings, community buildings, schools, outdoor spaces, and professional theatre venues - prioritising areas of socio-economic disadvantage or rural isolation that are under-served.
- Create new pathways into participatory arts careers including work experience, internships, training, mentoring, volunteering and employment.
- Run practical skills training for multi-sector businesses supporting them to learn how to connect better interpersonally in the workplace, with clients and as leaders.
- Provide opportunities for participants to work with a diverse range of dynamic professional artists and companies and other specialist practitioners.
- Signpost young people to other available arts activities through our networks.
- Provide training, mentoring, volunteering and employment for young and/or early career participatory artists and practitioners, especially those working with young people.

**OUR ACTIVITY PROGRAMMES**

**PROGRAMME 1: YOUTH THEATRE (objectives achieved are: a,b,e,g,h,i,j,m,n)**

**Youth Theatre**

A term-time programme of activities with 6 groups in West and South East Northumberland and online, providing a fun, safe and active environment where young people aged 7-19 explore their own lives and their wider world through drama and theatre. In these sessions, young people co-create dynamic, thought-provoking, original theatre alongside professional theatre artists - with the young people's ideas, emotions and experiences at the heart.

# **MORTAL FOOLS**

## **(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

### **TRUSTEES' REPORT**

*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

#### **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

The 6 groups are:

- Tyne Valley, West Northumberland: Stage 2 (school years 3-6); Stage 3/4 (school years 7-11) and a resident Youth Theatre partnership with Highfield Middle School in Prudhoe, West Northumberland.
- Ashington, South East Northumberland: Stage 2 (school years 3-6); Stage 3/4 (school years 7-11).
- Online: drawing young people from across the North East region (school years 5-11).

In 2023-24, our MFYT groups created an original film series 'The Bigger Picture' and two live performance nights, 'Fools Fest'.

#### **Ensemble Young Company**

This 5-month annual project (school years 9-13 and up to age 19) supports teenagers to co-create and tour original theatre in a process closely aligned with professional theatre production.

Young company members originate from our two main operational locations.

In 2023-24, the Ensemble Young Company toured their completed production 'Flux' (Apr 2023) and created their new production – 'Inevitable?' – which was created within a national Youth Theatre partnership project called 'Grow Up', involving Company 3 (London), Prime Theatre (Swindon) and Beyond Face (Plymouth) – including a weekend development residential for participating organisations.

#### **PROGRAMME 2: FUTURE READY (a,b,c,d,h,i,j,m,n)**

##### **Young Cultural Leaders**

Supporting young people in their broader personal development through social action projects, event management, Peer Facilitation training, volunteering and work experience. This includes opportunities to do higher level Arts Award qualifications.

##### **Creative Interventions**

Working with Education settings to use participation in creative activities to support young people to develop confidence, creative and social skills. Young people are referred into the groups by the host partner, using criteria like high levels of school absence, mental health or behavioural challenges or inter-sectional needs.

The structure is 12 weekly 2-hour sessions with an informal sharing at the end and young people completing an Arts Award qualification.

In 2023-24, our Creative Intervention partners were Duke's Secondary School in Ashington and Duchess's Community High School in Alnwick.

##### **Employability Skills**

In 2023-24, we worked with The Prince's Trust to pilot a co-delivered employability skills week supporting young people aged 16-25 with career development in the creative industries.

Later that year, we were commissioned by North of Tyne Combined Authority to pilot a new programme of employability skills delivery focused on young people aged 16-25 in and around Ashington, Northumberland. This work will be delivered in 2024-25.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**Cross-sector Partnerships**

Working with youth sector partners, we are testing co-delivery models combining creative practices with traditional youth work practice. The focus is on using a creative approach to develop employability, social action and leadership skills.

In 2023-24 we trialled 'Creative Mondays' arts drop in sessions with YMCA Northumberland.

**PROGRAMME 3: Professional Theatre for young audiences (b,c,e,h,j)**

We work with professional theatre artists (writers, directors, actors, designers and production staff) to create social-change theatre that is relevant to the lives of our core beneficiaries.

**Melva**

This digital online creative intervention programme has evolved from an original theatre production in 2017 to the current multi-media programme for schools. The digital package supports children's, teachers' and parents' mental health education and strategies for self-management of worries and anxiety and includes:

- Digital captured version of the original stage play – in five episodes
- Online storytelling game
- Animation Series, with themes aligned to the NHS 5 Steps for mental wellbeing (launched in September 2023)

In 2023-24, we agreed a commission with North of Tyne Combined Authority to provide annual programme licences free of charge for 50 schools in the North of Tyne area.

We also continued to develop Melva sponsorship packages with private businesses to provide free licences to schools that the businesses nominated.

We integrated a new evaluation approach into the programme structured to the PERMA™ Framework, generating a combination of teacher and pupil feedback and wellbeing data demonstrating impact.

During the year, we began development of a new component for the Melva programme – an illustrated novel for upper Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 children. The novel is being co-written by original Melva writer, Danielle Slade and Mortal Fools Artistic Director, Kiz Crosbie. The novel will address mental wellbeing themes pertinent to the target age group including transition and change, friendships, puberty, grief and loss and self-harm and suicidal ideation.

**PROGRAMME 4: CONNECT (b,h,l)**

This is our business training programme for multi-sector organisations, which generates earned income to subsidise our delivery with young people. The CONNECT training approach combines practice from actor training and theatre rehearsals with business thought leadership and social science and neuroscience content and research.

The CONNECT programme is a hybrid model of in person and online delivery and is a fast-growing strand of our work and income stream.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**PROGRAMME 5: Sector Development (c,d,f,g,i,j,k,n,o)**

**Running a Youth Theatre**

In Autumn 2023, we, together with 6 other Arts Council NPO Youth Theatre organisations (Beyond Face, Theatre Factory, Burnley Youth Theatre, Prime Theatre, Company 3, 20 Stories High), co-designed a year-long series of online training / practice-sharing sessions, covering subjects emerging from a national survey of Youth Theatre organisations.

These aim to improve Youth Theatre delivery across the UK, cultivate working partnerships and a mechanism for practice sharing and is a shared move towards raising the profile of Youth Theatre within the wider Arts sector. The programme launched in January 2024 and is being delivered throughout the year.

**National Youth Theatre Census**

Together with Company 3, Beyond Face and Prime Theatre, we devised plans to secure funding (from Arts Council England) to complete a national census of Youth Theatre organisations.

**Artist and Practitioner Development**

We are a sector leader in the North East in supporting professional cross-sector practitioners to develop their practice with, by and for children and young people.

We do this by providing training, mentoring and employment opportunities for practitioners and theatre-based artists, with a particular emphasis on those who are early career stage. We also work in partnership with cross-sector organisations working with young people, facilitating practice sharing via co-delivery of projects and activities.

**Entry Level Employment**

We currently have a full-time Marketing Assistant and introduced a part time (currently 0.8FTE) Assistant Practitioner & Coordinator in 2023-24.

We are working on the development of further entry-level positions in the coming year.

**Public Benefit**

The Trustees understand and have discussed the implications of the provisions of the Charities Act 2006, which state that all charities must demonstrate that they are established for public benefit, and have had due regard to the public benefit guidance issued by the Charity Commission. The Trustees believe that the charity meets both of the key principles.

Principle 1 - There must be an identifiable benefit, or benefits

Principle 2 - Benefit must be to the public, or a section of the public

The charity's principal public benefits are:

**1. Education and development of young people**

The charity's participatory arts activities focus on strengthening the social and emotional capabilities and mental health of young people – such things as confidence, resilience, creativity, communication, managing feelings, problem-solving, relationship-building, responsibility and perseverance, through participation in performance-based activities.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**Public Benefit (Cont.)**

**2. Education and development of adults**

The charity delivers professional development skills workshops with adults that utilise similar approaches to those used with young people but made bespoke for the particular setting e.g. teacher CPD and masterclasses in creative leadership and managing imposter syndrome.

**3. Events and plays for the general public**

The charity runs c. 20-30 events and performances per year with its various groups, which are delivered to a high standard and directed by paid professional staff. Those in partner settings are primarily for the young people, families, and staff associated with the setting. They also use community venues and / or in regional theatre venues for performances and events such as Gosforth Civic Theatre and YMCA Northumberland.

There is a safeguarding policy in place, which includes online working, and is reviewed at least annually (including a review of statutory guidance). There is a safeguarding link trustee and they, together with staff members as Designated Safeguarding Officer and a deputy, are all trained with a Level 3 Safeguarding accreditation, refreshed every 3 years.

As per our policy, we undertake the following Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and procedures:

- Ensuring that everyone who works directly and frequently (more than 3 days in any 30-day period) with children and young people under 18 on our behalf including paid employees, freelancers, volunteers or in any other capacity has an enhanced check with a children's barred list check from the DBS no more than 12 months old (including checks via the DBS update service).
- Ensuring trustees have an enhanced check from the DBS no more than 12 months old (including checks via the DBS update service)
- DBS checks are recorded, monitored and managed using our company management software.

The main beneficiaries are:

- Children and young people aged 7-19 in North East England who attend our activities e.g. our Youth Theatre groups. This includes both in-person and digital participation.
- Children and young people aged 7-19 in North East England who we work with in partnerships with other settings; arts, education or community organisations like in our Co-Creation Exchange and schools and our Melva programme. This includes national and international participants.
- Adults who participate in our work; artists and practitioners from other settings e.g. teachers and Youth Workers.
- Adults who participate in our professional development training – including national and international participants. This includes both in-person and digital participation.
- Members of the public who attend our performances and events. This includes both in-person and digital participation.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**Public Benefit (Cont.)**

We prioritise working with beneficiaries in locations of socio-economic disadvantage and rural isolation and which are under-served by cultural provision. From our base in YMCA Northumberland in Ashington, we operate a satellite model of delivery including a secondary base in Prudhoe in west Northumberland and a growing number of residential partnerships with cross-sector partners.

**Risk Management**

The Trustees regularly review the major governance, operational and financial risks which the charity faces as part of its annual business planning process and confirm that systems have been established to mitigate these risks.

The charity has a comprehensive risk management framework. It comprises:

- an annual review of the strategic risks the charity may face via the business plan
- the establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

The charity has a comprehensive approach to risk management, comprising:

- Whole company risk register, reviewed quarterly by senior staff and the Board
- Delegation of risk management responsibilities between staff, detailed in the risk register
- The establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified, reviewed by the FAR Sub-Group
- The implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

The Trustees are satisfied that appropriate financial systems and controls and employment policies and practices are in place. They consider the key risks facing the charity currently to be:

- **Competition for Grant Funding**  
Competition for grant funding within the charitable, youth and arts sector has increased throughout the year, with the charity receiving rejections from funders who were previously reliable supporters and several large current multi-year grants entering their final year in 2024.

The multi-stream income generation model the charity operates has maintained financial resilience, but the trustees recognise the need for the charity to decrease its reliance on grant funding (c68% of income in 2023-24) by maximising income from other income generation streams e.g. Melva commissions, CONNECT sales.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**Risk Management (Cont.)**

- **Staffing Capacity**

Demand for the charity's services continues to increase, especially in key operational areas. The charity has successfully grown its delivery core staff team during the year, and staff retention and satisfaction is high.

The Trustees recognise the importance of investment in key areas of staffing in the coming year, specifically increasing capacity in the senior leadership team and income generation programmes and this will be a focus in the coming year, with Unrestricted Reserves designated to support this.

- **Escalated and changing needs of young people**

Public Health England states that in 2023, 1 in 5 children and young people between 5-16 had a diagnosable mental health condition. This has been exacerbated by the social, economic and political landscape in the UK including the cost-of-living crisis and post-pandemic legacy.

The development of our working practices with young people has resulted in us attracting and retaining higher numbers of young people with complex challenges – creating additional profound, complex and changeable challenges in our delivery contexts.

The Trustees recognise the importance of supervision and support of delivery team staff as part of the charity's duty of care to staff, alongside safeguarding the welfare of children and young people. This will be an area for further development in the coming year.

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

**Overview**

Mortal Fools has successfully accomplished another year of growth, supported more young people than ever before and continued to co-create brilliant artistic work with a growing diversity of young people in the North East region.

In April 2023, we joined Arts Council England's National Portfolio of regularly funded organisations (NPO). This, together with continued support from trust and foundation grant funders and the securing of some new commissions, has maintained the financial resilience of the charity.

Becoming an Arts Council NPO positioned Mortal Fools on a national stage, amplifying the voices and needs of the young people we work with in the wider sector, supporting the establishment of new national partnerships and providing a step-change for the organisation. We were visited by the Chief Executive and regional colleagues from Arts Council England in February 2024, who were unreservedly encouraging about our development plans.

Ashington continues to be an exciting place for us to be operating – partly because of the demonstrable impact our work has on local young people and the excellent reputation we have cultivated amongst the community, together with the wider regeneration plans and funding secured for town centre developments. Our place-based approach has proved very successful in achieving these outcomes, with the marketing and delivery teams leading audience development.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

**Overview (Cont.)**

Delivery commissions have proved increasingly successful during the year, generating new income streams and providing new practice-development contexts. Notable successes have been:

- **A pilot project commissioned by and co-delivered with The Prince's Trust** as part of their national 'Get Started...' programme. We used creative methodology to deliver employability skills for young people wanting to enter the creative industries. This was noted by Prince's Trust as one of the most successful of these programmes.
- **A commission by North of Tyne Combined Authority to provide annual licences for the Melva digital programme** free of charge to 50 schools in the area. This resulted in c.4,000 children using the programme and – together with the new evaluation approach embedded into the programme – has generated data, testimonials and case studies to provide a compelling case for future support.
- **A commission by North of Tyne Combined Authority to design and deliver a programme of employability skills weeks in and around Ashington** – as part of their innovation funding. This was a new income source and supports the development of programmes of work which, if successful, could become a long-term component of our delivery programmes and a new entry point into our organisation.
- **The development, testing and independent evaluation of our *Wellbeing Practice Guide and Toolkit*** in four Northumberland cultural education settings has proved invaluable to the next stage of development of this work – providing a toolkit to prove impact on wellbeing in delivery contexts with children and young people.
- **Youth Music Trailblazer funding secured** - the first time we have applied to this funder, with the focus of embedding more music making across our programme delivery (music is often a more accessible art form than drama) and supporting practice sharing with our team and specialist musicians.
- **Creative Mondays** – a pilot of creative activities co-delivered between our staff and Youth Workers from YMCA Northumberland, supporting a new creative entry point for young people and practice-sharing opportunities between two organisations.

We remain committed to fighting for better futures for young people, working with cross-sector partners to improve systems, services and settings that support young people and building referral pathways with a range of organisations working with young people.

*“Mortal Fools continued growth and success is fabulous news for Northumberland and for children and young people. As well as co-creating powerful theatre productions and films of resonance and relevance, they are an excellent and inspirational training agency working across many diverse sectors. This is testament to their clarity of vision and the effectiveness of their approach in supporting strong, dynamic individuals and the leaders of tomorrow.” - **Cultural Development Manager, Northumberland County Council***

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

In summary, in 2023-24, the charity:

- Reached approximately **5,000 young people** who actively participated in our work. This includes young people participating in our weekly sessions, attending our live events and workshops, participating in our *Melva* programme, or participating in workshops run by external partners using our digital content and resource packs.
- Delivered creative activity directly with approximately **480 young people** through our programmes, including deep to light engagements facilitated by Mortal Fools.
- Delivered activities for young people in **44 weeks** of the year.
- Delivered **355** weekly sessions to **215 young people** in Mortal Fools Youth Theatre, school & youth settings, averaging **110 young people per week**
- Had live audiences of c.**1,120 people** at our performance events and screenings, and a further c.**1,500 people** watching our content at their own screenings.
- Achieved **3.4k views** on our YouTube totalling **117.1 hours watch time** (views only counted where average is at least 1 minute+ or 90% of short form content), and engaged approximately **50k people** via our Mortal Fools digital channels
- Supported **77 young people** to achieve an **Arts Award** qualification.
- Created **17 short films & animations** with young people.
- Engaged approximately **4,000 young people in our Melva Digital** programme for mental health between April 23 – Mar 24, and provided mental health focused training to over **50 teachers** in the North East. This equated to over 600+ online sessions delivered in school, and all evaluation data received demonstrated a notable improvement in children's knowledge, understanding and recall of self-management techniques (average 90% improvement from baseline to end of programme assessments).
- **Led an evaluation of our Wellbeing Evaluation Practice Guide & Toolkit** with the Northumberland Cultural Education Partnership and a freelance evaluator.
- **Provided 21 CPD / training sessions** for artists and producers both internally and externally.
- Delivered **51 CONNECT training interventions** and **engaged 470 training participants**, including 12 sessions for young adults on our employability project with Prince's Trust.
- Contracted **28 freelance professionals** to work with us.
- Recruited two young people into paid assistant practitioner roles, continued to work with our two existing young assistant practitioners, and created two volunteer assistant roles.
- Were nominated for two awards: 'The Third Sector Award' at the Pride Action North Awards (won) and 'The Hearts & Minds Award' for Curious Minds Northern Cultural Education Awards.
- Had work featured in national publications including The Guardian, The Stage, North East Times, Northern Insight Magazine, BDaily, Schools North East, and many other press publications.
- Continued to see and hear evidence of the positive impact our work is having on the children and young people we work with.

*"As a disabled young person, I was struggling to find a place that would accept me and that I would be comfortable working in. Mortal Fools is just so inclusive for everybody, from all different backgrounds. [...] the way a session is structured helps us loads [...] I always walk away with my head held high."* Ilana, 18, Ensemble Young Company Member & Assistant Practitioner

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

The main creative projects this year were:

**Ensemble Young Company – FLUX 2023 Tour**

A northern tour of our reworked Ensemble Young Company play, performed by 11 young people from Northumberland.

*“Absolutely blew me away. So powerful and emotional. Had me in tears! Each performer was exceptional. This should be in every school and also on the West End in London. Would be a sell out! Would recommend to everyone!”* FLUX 2023 Audience Member

**Ensemble Young Company – *Inevitable?* & *Grow Up* Project**

Participation in the national ‘Grow Up’ youth theatre NPOs collaboration project, attending a residential and practice sharing sessions with 3 other youth theatres and co-creating and premiering a new play *Inevitable?* with 11 young people from Northumberland.

*“Mortal Fools has really changed my life for the better. Before I didn’t leave my house or see anyone but now, I’m pretty much out every day. They taught me to be confident and trust in my ideas as well as good social skills and team leading skill.”* Ensemble Young Company Member, 16

**Youth Theatre – *The Bigger Picture***

Co-creating a series of 6 short films with our 6 youth theatre groups from Ashington and the Tyne Valley about socially engaged themes young people want to talk about. Included community filming/activity days and community screenings and workshops.

*“Mortal Fools has helped me build up my confidence, make connections with new people and make new friends. I’ve been much happier from the friends I’ve made at Mortal Fools and I’ve been so proud of all the times I’ve helped people out. I really love entertaining people and making them happy with my acting.”* Youth Theatre Participant, aged 12.

**Youth Theatre – *Fools Fest: Through the Wardrobe***

Two live events of short theatre performances from our 6 youth theatre groups in Ashington and the Tyne Valley – inspired by the themes and imagination of the Narnia stories.

*“The work you have done with my daughter at the Ashington YMCA after losing her mum has been astronomical. I cannot thank you enough and if I was able to live an eternity then it still wouldn’t be long enough for all the thank yous I need to say.”* Parent of Youth Theatre Member

**Youth Theatre – *Sounding Board R&D***

A research and development term integrating music and sound into our theatre process and learning new skills.

**Creative Interventions Youth**

Two pilot projects of creative drop-in activities at YMCA Northumberland youth work project – *Creative Mondays* – a light touch intervention to engage more young people facing barriers in the arts in Ashington.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

**Creative Interventions Education – Duke’s Secondary School & Duchess’s Community High School.**

Four 12-week creative intervention projects in secondary schools to support young people referred because they have specific needs or challenging circumstances. The groups experimented with different creative activities, created theatre & audio pieces, presented a showcase of their work and achieved Explore Arts Awards. Included one partnership project with Natural England exploring young people’s relationship with the outdoors.

*“It’s just made me less of a shut off – I am way more of a person – I don’t know how to explain it, but I am just more of a normal person around people now, it’s like wow!”* - School Intervention & Creative Mondays Youth Group Participant

**Melva Digital – Explore Scratchicle Town**

A new 8-week intervention launched for academic year 2023/24, using short form animation and storytelling to educate young people on the NHS 5 ways to wellbeing. The new content was launched at the start of the academic year 2023/24, alongside a new programme of Teacher support and training, and evaluation tools.

*“This is a very worthwhile programme which was a pleasure to deliver to our children. Children who wouldn’t normally speak about their fears and emotions have had the confidence to overcome this by listening to others.”* – Participating Melva Teacher

**OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

We trained and supported 4 new **Peer Facilitators** into voluntary and paid roles helping run our younger youth theatre groups and worked with 2 existing Peer Facilitators. These roles provide an entry route into part-time creative employment and volunteering for young people from our youth theatre programmes.

*“Mortal Fools is the greatest and most welcoming theatre group anyone could be a part of”* Connor, 18, Ensemble Young Company Member & Volunteer

We created a new **early-career employed role** of Assistant Practitioner & Coordinator, supporting a recent graduate into their first role in the arts. They have brought much-needed resource to our delivery team, and have learned new skills in co-creation, facilitation, coordination and fundraising.

*“I can thrive the most when I am part of a close-knit, supportive team, who will help encourage me to be the best version of myself [...] Mortal Fools has provided me with the stability, consistency, and support I need to find my feet in the industry in my first job.”* Jess, 21, Assistant Practitioner & Coordinator

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

We have delivered **creative outreach sessions** with organisations like:

- Curious Arts
- Hirst Welfare Centre & Hirst Park, Ashington
- Gosforth Civic Theatre
- Ashington Town Council (Pride in the Park, Family Day, Christmas Lights switch on)
- Duke's Secondary School, Ashington
- Northumberland College
- YMCA Northumberland

*"The families and young people who engaged with Mortal Fools thoroughly enjoyed their experiences. Several parents commented that having free and accessible activities for all ages has been really helpful for their families. Another told me she was happy to see children getting access to technology (cameras, voice recording, animation software) because schools have ever decreasing budgets for arts and drama. The excitement for self-expression has been palpable!"*  
Parks Officer, Hirst Park, Ashington

We **distributed digital content (films & resource packs)** to 20+ settings which hosted screenings and workshops (schools, colleges, youth work settings, arts organisations).

**PARTNERSHIPS**

**Local Authority & Strategic:**

- **North of Tyne Combined Authority** – several commissions secured, as detailed above.
- **Northumberland Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP)**  
Our CEO is the Chair of Northumberland LCEP group, an initiative established by Culture Bridge North East to deliver the Arts Council's Cultural Education Challenge at a sub-regional level.  
The most notable achievement in this setting was the support for developing, testing and evaluating our *Wellbeing Practice Guide and Toolkit*.
- **Creative Health** networks and initiatives  
This is growing area of work nationally – signalling the coming together of the Arts and Health sectors, recognising the profound impact that creative participation can have on people's health and wellbeing.
- **Ashington Town Council** – local funding support, contribution to their community events and advocacy.

**Voluntary Sector and Community-Based:**

- **North East Youth Alliance** – contributions to their conferences, commissioned workforce development training and membership of their Culture and Youth partnerships steering group.
- **YMCA Northumberland** – collaborating on joint employment of early career staff and jointly developing creative activity programmes for young people.

# **MORTAL FOOLS**

## **(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

### **TRUSTEES' REPORT**

*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

#### **PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS**

The overall focus for the coming year is creating the conditions within the charity to support the next stage of organisational growth and development.

**Place-based working** continues to be a key strategic focus, considering our place within the Northeast region and Northumberland and our alignment with strategic development objectives for both areas.

Our localised approach will focus on our hometown, Ashington. Local developments in the coming years that we will pursue are:

- The opening of the Northumberland Line railway service, providing a direct link between Ashington and Newcastle city centre. This will increase social mobility for the young people of Ashington, together with increasing the ease with which people can travel to Ashington to take part in our activities.
- Animating Ashington – a commission we are applying for listed by Northumberland County Council to provide a programme of creative and cultural activity, with a focus on children and young people (decision late Spring 2024).
- Place-based programme development – looking to work with creative health colleagues and local partners to apply for investment in a strategic place-based application to Arts Council England.
- New cultural community hub building at Wansbeck Square – which we will jointly apply for operation of with YMCA Northumberland in 2024. We aim for this to become our new home, within a high-spec creative facility at the gateway to the town centre.

#### **Business Development**

There are several focus areas of this work, including:

- Creation of **new staff roles** to increase capacity in senior leadership and income generation within the business
- Building on the success of our digital audience engagement by launching a new **Digital Strategy** to include a fit-for-purpose website and digital engagement and content creation plans for the coming years.
- **Income generation** – specifically moving towards less reliance on grant income and maximising income from our earned income streams.

For Melva, this means:

- Building on the success of previous local authority commissions with a new relationship with the new North East Combined Authority.
- Pursuing avenues for profiling this as a case study for national UK commissions.
- Developing the Melva programme systems so it can accommodate delivery at scale.

For CONNECT, this means:

- A relaunch of the programme with new content.
- Growing the delivery team.
- Building new multi-year client relationships.

We will also develop other earned income streams, including:

- Employability Skills delivery models and commissions.
- Developing our *Wellbeing Practice Guide and Toolkit* into a saleable package.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2024*

**PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS (CONTINUED)**

**Creative Health Initiatives**

This is a field of work gaining national momentum, which our work has long been well aligned with. Working with colleagues at Northumberland County Council, the National Centre for Creative Health and via a range of Creative Health networks, we will take steps to advance this work, including:

- Submitting our relevant work for peer review and to form part of strategic developments regionally and nationally.
- Seek funding to develop Creative Health practice and delivery in Northumberland.
- Launch our comprehensive *Wellbeing Practice Guide and Toolkit* for use in multi-sector delivery settings, providing a proven method to develop delivery practice and generate compelling data.

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES**

The Trustees (who are also the Directors of Mortal Fools for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

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

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

Signed on behalf of the Trustees



**Richard Wise**  
Trustee  
9 December 2024

# **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS ON THE UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS OF MORTAL FOOLS LIMITED YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

I hereby report to the Trustees of Mortal Fools (Charity Registration Number 1153400) on my examination of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 set out on pages 25 to 39.

## **Responsibilities and Basis of Report**

As the charity's Trustees (and also its directors for the purposes of company law), you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

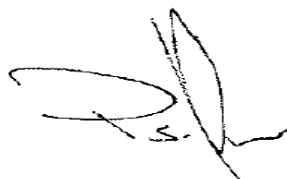
## **Independent Examiner's Statement**

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000, your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountant in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods or principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102)).

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.



**Pete O'Hara, FCA, Chartered Accountant**  
**Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales**  
26 La Sagesse, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 3AF

9 December 2024

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<b>Income</b>					
Income from Investments	3	5,392	-	5,392	1,241
Income from Charitable Activities	4	307,178	248,579	555,757	409,913
Income from Donations & Legacies	5	31,640	-	31,640	23,500
		<b>344,210</b>	<b>248,579</b>	<b>592,789</b>	<b>434,654</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Expenditure on Charitable Activities	6	274,428	336,364	610,792	492,393
		<b>274,428</b>	<b>336,364</b>	<b>610,792</b>	<b>492,393</b>
<b>Net Income/(Expenditure)</b>		<b>69,782</b>	<b>(87,785)</b>	<b>(18,003)</b>	<b>(57,739)</b>
Balance brought forward		139,474	249,970	389,444	447,183
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>£209,256</b>	<b>£162,185</b>	<b>£371,441</b>	<b>£389,444</b>

The notes on pages 27 to 39 form part of the financial statements.

All of the activities of the company are classed as continuing.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION/BALANCE SHEET**  
**AS AT 31 MARCH 2024**

	Notes	31 March 2024 £	31 March 2023 £
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Tangible Fixed Assets	9	2,572	13,125
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Debtors	10	104,501	159,650
Cash At Bank & In Hand		293,103	235,303
		<u>397,604</u>	<u>394,953</u>
<b>Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year</b>	11	(28,735)	(18,634)
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)		<u>368,869</u>	<u>376,319</u>
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	12	<u><b>£371,441</b></u>	<u><b>£389,444</b></u>
<b>Represented by:</b>			
Unrestricted Reserves	13	209,256	139,474
Restricted Reserves	13	162,185	249,970
		<u><b>£371,441</b></u>	<u><b>£389,444</b></u>

The notes on pages 27 to 39 form part of the financial statements.

The Trustees are satisfied that for the year ended 31 March 2024 the charity was entitled to exemption under section 477(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees also confirm that the Members have not required the charity to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

(i) ensuring that the charity keeps adequate accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act, and

(ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charity.

**These financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 9 December 2024 and signed on their behalf:**



**Richard Wise**  
**Trustee**  
**Company Registration Number 08102487**

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**1. Accounting Policies**

**Basis of Preparation**

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable United Kingdom accounting standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 – 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland' ('FRS 102'), and with the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, modified to include certain financial instruments at fair value.

Advantage has been taken of the provisions in the SORP for Charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a statement of cashflows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity.

**Income**

All income is included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income, any performance related conditions attached have been met or are fully within the control of the charity, the income is considered probable and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Donations and legacy income is received by way of donations, legacies, grants and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Where legacies have been notified to the charity but the criteria for income recognition have not been met, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.
- Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.
- Investment income is included when receivable.
- Income from charitable trading activity is accounted for when earned.
- Other income is accounted for when receivable.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**1. Accounting Policies (Continued)**

**Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:

- Costs of raising funds comprise the costs associated with attracting donations, grants and legacies and the costs of trading for fundraising purposes.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
- Other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

**Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation**

Depreciation is provided on any fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the assets over their remaining useful lives as follows:

- IT Equipment - 33% per annum straight line
- Office Equipment – 25% per annum straight line

A full year's depreciation charge is applied in the year of acquisition and no charge is made in the year of disposal.

**Impairment of Fixed Assets**

A review for indicators of impairment is carried out at each reporting date, with the recoverable amount being estimated where such indicators exist. Where the carrying value exceeds the recoverable amount, the asset is impaired accordingly. Prior impairments are also reviewed for possible reversal at each reporting date.

**Financial Instruments**

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the charity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs.

Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted.

Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost where there is a material adjustment.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**1. Accounting Policies (Continued)**

**Fund Accounting**

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the purposes of the charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for specific purposes.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

**Taxation Status**

Mortal Fools is a Charity registered under the 1960 Charities Act and is accorded exemption from liability to taxation on its income under S505 Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988.

**Going Concern**

There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

**Judgements and Key Sources of Estimation Uncertainty**

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

There are no significant judgements or estimation uncertainty included within the financial statements.

**2. Legal Status**

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.

**3. Income from Investments**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Interest on cash deposits	5,392	-	5,392	1,241
	<b>£5,392</b>	<b>£-</b>	<b>£5,392</b>	<b>£1,241</b>

The 2023 total of £1,241 relates wholly to Unrestricted Funds.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**4. Income from Charitable Activities**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Grant Income</b>				
#iWill Youth Social Action Fund at the Community Foundation for Tyne & Wear and Northumberland (CFTWN)	-	-	-	10,000
The 1989 Willan Charitable Trust at the CFTWN	-	10,000	10,000	-
Arnold Clark Community Fund	-	-	-	1,000
Arts Council England: National Portfolio Organisation (NPO)	180,000	-	180,000	-
Asda Foundation	-	294	294	-
Ashington Community Development Trust at the CFTWN	-	10,000	10,000	-
Ashington Town Council	-	5,000	5,000	-
BBC Children In Need	-	29,370	29,370	30,570
BBC Children In Need: Youth Social Action Fund	-	-	-	26,000
Bernicia Foundation	-	-	-	10,000
Carroll Savage Fund at the CFTWN	-	2,500	2,500	-
Co-op Local Community Fund	-	-	-	3,268
The Curtin PARP Fund at the CFTWN	-	-	-	(12,283)
Garfield Weston Foundation	25,000	-	25,000	25,000
Hadrian's Wall 1900 Community Grants and National Lottery Heritage Fund	-	-	-	4,999
High Sheriff of Northumberland Youth Against Crime Award Scheme at the CFTWN	-	1,000	1,000	1,000
The Ironmongers' Company	-	-	-	4,411
John D Endowment Fund at the CFTWN	-	-	-	2,500
The Joicey Trust	-	2,000	2,000	-
Kavli Trust	-	52,789	52,789	105,012
Kerry Grassroots at the CFTWN	-	-	-	4,987
Key Fund Federation	-	-	-	168
Lady Betty Martin Fund within the North East Fund for the Arts at the CFTWN	-	-	-	5,000
Linden Family Fund at the CFTWN	-	5,000	5,000	-
Muckle LLP at the CFTWN	-	1,000	1,000	3,000
The National Lottery Community Fund: Awards For All	-	-	-	10,000

Continued overleaf...

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**4. Income from Charitable Activities (Cont.)**

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
<b>Grant Income (Cont.)</b>				
The National Lottery Community Fund (RC North East and Cumbria Region) in partnership with the Ballinger Charitable Trust: Reaching Communities	-	-	-	10,000
Newcastle City Council TWAM – LCEP	-	10,000	10,000	-
North of Tyne Combined Authority: Small Grant Programme	-	49,598	49,598	-
North of Tyne Combined Authority: Inspire	-	20,000	20,000	-
North of Tyne Creative England	-	-	-	12,500
Northumberland Children's Trust	-	5,000	5,000	5,000
Northumberland County Council: Arts & Heritage SLA	-	8,748	8,748	9,721
Northumberland County Council: Cultural Investment Project	-	5,000	5,000	-
Northumberland County Council: Community Chest Scheme	-	-	-	5,000
Northumberland Public Health: Creative Northumberland	-	-	-	9,999
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	-	6,000	6,000	-
Prime & Spriggs Family Fund at the CFTWN	-	-	-	4,965
Ridley Family Charity at the CFTWN	-	-	-	3,000
Robert Wood Trust at the CFTWN	-	2,000	2,000	-
Sir James Knott Trust	10,000	-	10,000	10,000
Youth Music Trailblazer Fund	-	23,280	23,280	-
Wellesley Trust Fund at the CFTWN	-	-	-	10,000
	<b>215,000</b>	<b>248,579</b>	<b>463,579</b>	<b>314,817</b>
<b>Earned Income</b>				
Box Office Takings	1,596	-	1,596	1,734
Drama Session Fees	11,389	-	11,389	13,754
Partner Contributions	14,238	-	14,238	29,133
Refreshment & Other Sundry Sales	1,110	-	1,110	1,136
Statutory Contract Income	36,874	-	36,874	-
Training Fees	26,971	-	26,971	49,339
	<b>92,178</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>92,178</b>	<b>95,096</b>
	<b>£307,178</b>	<b>£248,579</b>	<b>£555,757</b>	<b>£409,913</b>

Of the 2023 total of £409,913, £134,289 relates to Unrestricted Funds and £275,624 to Restricted Funds.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**5. Income from Donations & Legacies**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds £</b>	<b>Restricted Funds £</b>	<b>2024 £</b>	<b>2023 £</b>
Donations & Gift Aid	4,875	-	4,875	13,265
Donation In Kind	4,500	-	4,500	-
Theatre Tax Relief	22,265	-	22,265	10,235
	<b>£31,640</b>	<b>£-</b>	<b>£31,640</b>	<b>£23,500</b>

The 2023 total of £23,500 relates wholly to Unrestricted Funds.

**6. Total Expenditure on Charitable Activities**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds £</b>	<b>Restricted Funds £</b>	<b>2024 £</b>	<b>2023 £</b>
<b>Production &amp; Activity Costs</b>				
Salaries & On Costs	188,438	234,342	422,780	328,524
Freelance Project Worker Fees	11,999	24,089	36,088	32,889
Production, Hire & Staging Costs	12,274	15,409	27,683	41,876
Design, Print & Promotional Materials	20,709	17,015	37,724	26,860
<b>Support Costs</b>				
Administrative Costs	33,358	17,582	50,940	43,861
Consultancy Fees	957	4,070	5,027	-
Staff Training	2,042	4,301	6,343	3,331
Depreciation	347	10,206	10,553	11,181
Website Development	-	9,350	9,350	-
<b>Governance Costs</b>				
Accountancy & Payroll Fees	2,857	-	2,857	3,219
Board Costs	650	-	650	-
Legal & Professional	797	-	797	652
	<b>£274,428</b>	<b>£336,364</b>	<b>£610,792</b>	<b>£492,393</b>

Of the 2023 total of £492,393, £142,140 relates to Unrestricted Funds and £350,253 to Restricted Funds.

**7. Net Movement in Funds**

	<b>2024 £</b>	<b>2023 £</b>
The net movement in Funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Depreciation of Owned Fixed Assets	10,553	11,181
Independent Examiner's Fees – Independent Examination	900	900
Independent Examiner's Fees – Other Services	300	-

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**8. Staff Costs & Directors' Remuneration**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Gross Salary Costs	383,743	300,115
Employer's National Insurance	28,132	20,133
Employer's Pension Contributions	10,905	8,276
	<b>£422,780</b>	<b>£328,524</b>

No employee received remuneration of more than £60,000 during the year (2023: Nil).

The average number of staff employed during the year, calculated as full-time equivalents, was as follows:

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>No.</b>	<b>No.</b>
Artistic Production and Support	13	11

No remuneration was paid to any Trustees in the year.

No travel and subsistence expenses were reimbursed to Trustees in respect of their attendance at meetings of the charity (2023: £Nil).

**9. Tangible Fixed Assets**

	<b>IT &amp; Office Equipment</b>	<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Cost</b>		
At 1 April 2023	37,197	37,197
Additions in year	-	-
At 31 March 2024	<b>37,197</b>	<b>37,197</b>
<b>Accumulated Depreciation</b>		
At 1 April 2023	24,072	24,072
Charge for year	10,553	10,553
At 31 March 2024	<b>34,625</b>	<b>34,625</b>
<b>Net Book Value</b>		
At 31 March 2024	<b>£2,572</b>	<b>£2,572</b>
At 1 April 2023	£13,125	£13,125

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**10. Debtors**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Trade Debtors	5,300	22,726
Other Debtors	5,000	12,998
Accrued Income	90,749	119,159
Prepayments	3,452	4,767
	<b>£104,501</b>	<b>£159,650</b>

All sums are due within 1 year.

**11. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Trade Creditors	12,512	7,291
Other Taxes & Social Security Costs	8,859	7,239
Other Creditors - Pension Contributions Due	1,700	1,381
Income Received In Advance	1,100	-
Other Creditors	40	40
Accruals	4,524	2,683
	<b>£28,735</b>	<b>£18,634</b>

**12. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Fixed Assets	340	2,232	2,572	13,125
Debtors	10,563	93,938	104,501	159,650
Cash at Bank and In Hand	220,142	72,961	293,103	235,303
Creditors – Due Within 1 Year	(21,789)	(6,946)	(28,735)	(18,634)
	<b>£209,256</b>	<b>£162,185</b>	<b>£371,441</b>	<b>£389,444</b>

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**13. Analysis of Charitable Funds**

	Fund at 1 April 2023 £	Income in Year £	Expenditure in Year £	Fund at 31 March 2024 £
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>				
Charity General Fund	139,474	344,210	(274,428)	209,256
<b>Restricted Funds</b>				
#iwill Youth Social Action Fund at the Community Foundation for Tyne & Wear and Northumberland (CFTWN)	10,000	-	(10,000)	-
The 1989 Willan Charitable Trust at the CFTWN	-	10,000	(3,092)	6,908
Arts Council England National Lottery Project Grants: Co-Creation Exchange	18,994	-	(18,994)	-
Asda Foundation	-	294	(294)	-
Ashington Community Development Trust at the CFTWN	-	10,000	(10,000)	-
Ashington Town Council	-	5,000	(5,000)	-
BBC Children In Need	-	29,370	(29,370)	-
DCMS Youth Investment Fund	6,712	-	(6,520)	192
BBC Children In Need Youth Social Action Fund	23,400	-	(23,400)	-
Carroll Savage Fund at the CFTWN	-	2,500	(2,500)	-
CBNE: Capacity Building	5,000	-	-	5,000
CBNE: Partnership Investment (PI)	22,566	-	(5,524)	17,042
High Sheriff of Northumberland Youth Against Crime Award Scheme at the CFTWN	-	1,000	-	1,000
The Ironmongers' Company	4,411	-	(4,411)	-
The Joicey Trust	-	2,000	-	2,000

Continued overleaf...

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**13. Analysis of Charitable Funds**

	Fund at 1 April 2023 £	Income in Year £	Expenditure in Year £	Fund at 31 March 2024 £
Kavli Trust	54,833	52,789	(62,279)	45,343
Kerry Grassroots at the CFTWN	2,602	-	(2,602)	-
Linden Family Fund at the CFTWN	-	5,000	(5,000)	-
Muckle LLP at the CFTWN	3,000	1,000	(4,000)	-
NCC: Community Chest Scheme	4,937	-	(3,079)	1,858
Newcastle City Council TWAM: LCEP	-	10,000	(2,470)	7,530
North of Tyne Combined Authority: Inspire	-	20,000	(12,640)	7,360
North of Tyne Combined Authority: Small Grant Programme	-	49,598	-	49,598
North of Tyne Creative England	6,322	-	(6,322)	-
Northumberland Children's Trust	-	5,000	(5,000)	-
Northumberland County Council: Cultural Investment Project	-	5,000	(2,658)	2,342
Northumberland County Council (NCC): Arts and Heritage SLA	91	8,748	(8,839)	-
Northumberland Public Health: Creative Northumberland	19,998	-	(18,350)	1,648
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	61,438	6,000	(67,438)	-
Prime & Spriggs Family Fund at the CFTWN	4,965	-	(4,965)	-
Ridley Family Charity at the CFTWN	367	-	(183)	184
Robert Wood Trust at the CFTWN	-	2,000	(2,000)	-
The Rothley Trust	334	-	(334)	-
Youth Music Trailblazer Fund	-	23,280	(9,100)	14,180
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>249,970</b>	<b>248,579</b>	<b>(336,364)</b>	<b>162,185</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>£389,444</b>	<b>£592,789</b>	<b>£(610,792)</b>	<b>£371,441</b>



**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**13. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)**

Name of Restricted Fund	Purpose & Allocation of the Restricted Fund
<b>Project-Specific Funds</b>	
<i>BBC Children in Need Youth Social Action Fund / #iWill Social Action Fund at CFTWN</i>	Towards the cost of developing and embedding youth-led social action within Mortal Fools Youth Theatre, including running weekly sessions, community outreach sessions, and creation of social action focused creative outputs.
<i>North of Tyne Creative England: Culture and Creative Investment Programme</i>	Towards support of full-time income generation Producer role.
<i>Muckle at CFTWN</i>	Towards the cost of providing 5 schools with Melva licenses, to support pupils' mental health and wellbeing.
<i>Prime &amp; Spriggs Family Fund at CFTWN</i>	Towards the costs of running Stage 2 Mortal Fools Youth Theatre group in Ashington.
<i>Culture Bridge North East Partnership Funding / Northumberland Public Health / Newcastle City Council TWAM</i>	Towards the cost of <i>Creative Northumberland</i> , a collaborative project between schools and cultural organisations testing the impact of cultural activity on wellbeing. Mortal Fools are acting as budget holders for this project on behalf of the <a href="#">Northumberland LCEP</a> .
<i>Ashington Community Development Trust via CFTWN / ASDA Foundation</i>	Towards the costs of running 3 x Mortal Fools Youth Theatre groups in Ashington, to support the mental health and wellbeing of children aged 7 to 19
<i>Carroll Savage / Linden Family Fund / High Sheriff Northumberland Youth Against Crime Scheme (2024) – all at CFTWN / N'land CC: Cultural Investment Project</i>	Towards the costs of running our Ensemble Young Company group in 2023-24, including the creation and touring of 'Inevitable' as part of the 'Grow Up' partnership project with Company Three.
<i>Culture Bridge North East: Capacity Building</i>	To fund a dedicated Producer for <i>Creative Northumberland</i> .
<i>The Ironmongers' Company / Robert Wood Trust at the CFTWN</i>	Towards Creative Interventions in Schools.
<i>ACE PG Co-Creation Exchange / Kerry Grassroots at CFTWN</i>	Towards the cost of the <a href="#">Co-Creation Exchange Network</a> and Ensemble Young Company group in 2023, including: the co-creation and production of the original <a href="#">FLUX</a> live performance in Ashington (2022); the filming and distribution of digital version of the show; the updated and re-worked <i>FLUX tour</i> (2023); related outreach work; and cross-sector development work.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**13. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)**

Name of Restricted Fund	Purpose & Allocation of the Restricted Fund
<b>Project-Specific Funds (Cont.)</b>	
<i>Youth Music Trailblazer Fund</i>	Towards the costs of piloting new approaches to music making across all of our Mortal Fools Youth Theatre groups and outreach groups in 2024.
<i>North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA): Small Grants Programme. Commissioned by North East Combined Authority funded by the UK government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.</i>	Funding for 'Future Ready' - our pilot employability skills project supporting economically inactive and/or socially isolated young people aged 16-30 in Northumberland.
<i>NTCA: Inspire Project</i>	Towards the cost of developing new wellbeing education content for the <i>Melva</i> programme.

**14. Related Party Transactions**

There were no related party transactions during this year.

**15. Taxation**

The company is a registered charity and no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

**16. Financial Commitments**

No material financial commitments have been made in respect of future financial years.

**17. Company Limited by Guarantee**

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

There are currently 11 members of the company (2023: 10).

**MORTAL FOOLS**

England & Wales - Charity number 1153400

---

# Accounts

---

Company Registration Number 08102487

Registered Charity Number 1153400

# **MORTAL FOOLS**

(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

## **REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**

**For the year ending 31 March 2023**



**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2023*

**NOTE FROM THE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES**

Mortal Fools has successfully accomplished another year of growth, supported more young people than ever before and continues to co-create high calibre artistic work, with a growing diversity of young people in the North East region. We rely on the ability, appetite, passion and the continued efforts of the Mortal Fools core team and Board of Trustees to sustain our success. We continue to work at pace but there is evident ownership and pride at all levels within Mortal Fools. We have reacted well to maintain good levels of staff wellbeing and we have continued, in our view, to provide unrivalled working conditions in a difficult climate.

Throughout 2022/23 we continued to mature and increased our impact all within a well managed budget. To remain relevant, we increased the depth and diversity of the Board by involving more young people and recognised the need to embark upon a Board recruitment process to increase the depth, breadth, and skill base of our Trustees to support our ambitions and trajectory. This will prepare us well for a successful 2023/24 and beyond.

June 2022 marked our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary which is significant amidst a backdrop of the economic and political unrest that still ensues after the pandemic.

We are still learning to be the size we are. We have consolidated key positions, created some new substantive posts and increased some core team members' working hours. This has improved our capacity and enabled us to maintain high quality service, with a greater reach, while securing our financial position.

There is little solace to reading recent statistics that suggest the national economic recovery was better than initially recorded. This is not the reality for those we strive to support. High inflation has exacerbated the already mounting concerns associated with the real cost of living which has impacted our staff as well as our beneficiaries and their families. This and the pandemic's long shadow continues to impact mental health, emotional and behavioural issues for young people, presenting significant challenges for our delivery team while reinforcing the continued relevance of what we do.

The move to Ashington in 2021 has proven to be right for Mortal Fools. It was a risk, but we committed to sustain our connections and delivery in Prudhoe. Our reach in both the west and southeast of Northumberland has increased, bringing the realisation of our ultimate ambitions to operate from our own purpose-built premises closer to reality.

We continue to fine tune the organisation, improve our forward planning and governance. Our ability and confidence to fill substantive posts moves us ever closer to fulfilling our ambitions. At the heart of this has been the ability to secure multiyear funding which has been bolstered by the news that we are to become an Arts Council England regularly funded National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) from April 2023. This brings with it new pressures as the cycles of funding are further apart. Competition for this funding is greater than ever, it is critical that they are sustained, but equally we have to maintain a model that can exist without them. I have every confidence that we will continue to be successful.

On behalf of the Board and beneficiaries, I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the team and its leadership for another excellent year.



Richard Wise, Chair of Trustees

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2023*

The Trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year to 31 March 2023.

**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

<b>Registered charity name</b>	Mortal Fools
<b>Charity registration number</b>	1153400
<b>Company registration number</b>	08102487
<b>Registered office</b>	YMCA Northumberland, North View, Ashington, NE63 9XQ

**Trustees**

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

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

Mr R Wise (Chair)	
Ms R Pattinson	
Mrs R A K Barclay	
Mr P Douglas	
Mr M Gate	Appointed 1 July 2023
Ms N Leyden	Appointed 25 September 2023
Mr S Rutherford-Orrrock	Appointed 25 September 2023
Miss M Saunders	Appointed 26 June 2023
Ms S Spencer	
Miss K Stanforth	

**Company Secretary** Ms S Allen

**Bankers** Triodos Bank, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AS

**Independent Examiner** Mr P O'Hara FCA, 4 Stoneyhurst Road West, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1PG

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2023*

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

**Governing Documents**

Mortal Fools is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 12 June 2012, as Northern Arts Enterprises Limited, and registered as a charity on 14 August 2013.

It was established under the Memorandum of Association that established its objects and powers and is governed under its Articles of Association, as amended by special resolutions registered at Companies House on 5 July 2012, 3 September 2012, 8 August 2013, 12 May 2016, 22 February 2018, 1 December 2020 and 28 February 2022.

The Directors of the company are also Trustees of the charity.

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

**Charitable Purpose**

Mortal Fools charitable objects are for the benefit of the public particularly but not exclusively in the north of England, through the teaching, practice and showcasing of the arts in all their forms:

- (1) To help children and young people develop their skills, capacity and capabilities to enable them to participate fully in society as responsible, mature and fulfilled individuals;
- (2) To advance the mental health education of children, young people, their significant adults and the general public to improve mental wellbeing;
- (3) To promote, support and improve the social inclusion of children and young people who are socially excluded by providing them with opportunities to access activities and develop their skills and experiences in such a way that they are better able to participate more fully in society;

For the purposes of this clause 'socially excluded' means children and young people (up to aged 25) who are excluded from society, or parts of society (like social circles) as a result of one or more of the following factors: socio-economic circumstances; race; gender; poor educational or skills attainment; mental health; disability; bullying and harassment and ethnic origin.

- (4) To maintain, improve, and advance arts education of children and young people, professional artists and the general public.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2023*

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)**

**Board Structure & Operation**

The charity currently has 10 Trustees. This year, the charity has conducted governance development through training from external providers, critical friends and integration of practices from wider business sectors.

The Board meets a minimum of five times per year, including at least one full away day for strategic planning. Meetings this year transitioned from Covid-19 driven practices back into being predominantly meetings in person, with the integrated use of video and digital technology to enable hybrid meetings where this supported inclusive and accessible participation.

In 2023, meetings moved from bi-monthly into quarterly, to align better with funder reporting timelines and encourage more work completed by trustee sub-groups in between whole Board meetings. The sub-groups will be reviewed next year, with the Finance, Audit and Risk (FAR) group (financial management / risk register and general risk notes / legal compliance) remaining active throughout.

Detailed written reports and an agenda are prepared by Trustees and senior staff and circulated in advance of Board meetings, integrating notes from sub-group meetings.

The charity is working on board development to increase representation of key community stakeholder groups in governance and improve the diversity of trustees. Trustee recruitment commenced in 2023 and will continue into the next reporting period. The focus of recruitment is to engage community representatives from key locations, young people, people who have experienced poverty, those working with young people in key partnership settings e.g. Education, Youth and Health, HR and Legal support.

The charity will commence a new model of supporting young people (18-25) to become Trustees in 2023-24.

**Appointment and Induction of Trustees**

Trustees are recruited via a combination of open advertising and contacts via personal and professional networks. In all cases, Trustees are elected to the Board following the same process:

- Submission of an application letter and CV
- \*Interview by two Trustees (considering skills, experience, alignment with company values, gaps within current governance)
- Opportunity to observe a Board meeting and a meeting with Chair of trustees and CEO
- Recommendation of appointment to full Board and appointment at general meeting

\*All applying trustees are likely to be interviewed if deemed suitable for appointment from their application.

New Trustees are inducted by other Trustees and senior staff, supported by a comprehensive written Trustee Induction Pack including a range of resources to support their understanding of their role and the charity's activities, and signposted to training by external providers, with the Company covering any costs associated with the training.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2023*

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)**

**Reserves Policy**

The Trustees have reviewed the charity's needs for reserves in line with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission.

The Trustees aim to hold a level of Unrestricted Reserves which enables the charity to have sufficient financial resources to meet various liabilities which would crystallise if Mortal Fools were unable to continue operating, together with an allowance to enable the charity to respond flexibly to issues or appropriate initiatives which might be identified outside of its annual budgeting process.

At present, the Trustees estimate that the Unrestricted Reserves required to cover all known liabilities for a period of 3-6 months amounts to approximately £135,000. The Trustees recognise that these liabilities will increase as the charity continues to grow.

Mortal Fools currently holds Unrestricted Reserves of £139,474 at 31 March 2023, £138,787 of which are 'free Reserves', defined as total non-designated Unrestricted Funds minus the value of unrestricted Tangible Fixed Assets.

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

**Grant-making**

The charity does not currently engage in grant-making activity.

**Contribution of Volunteers**

The charity makes limited use of volunteers within its productions and to support its activities.

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

**Aims & Objectives**

Mortal Fools' purpose is to support people to have better quality inter-personal relationships with one another and to use theatre and drama-based activities as the methodology to achieve this.

We are a company of participatory artists and practitioners who are committed to co-creating compelling, dynamic, socially-relevant and high-quality theatre-based work with children, young people and communities.

We work with 1,000s of children and young people every year, mostly in the North East. We develop our skills, knowledge and approach through dynamic multi-sector partnerships (Youth, Community, Health and Arts and Culture), jointly co-constructing work to meet the contemporary needs of children and young people.

We are champions of theatre produced by young people and for young people, we advocate for this work to be recognised and supported as an important art form in our sector, touring our work nationally, supporting participatory artists to train in co-creation and embedding achieving positive wellbeing outcomes across all our work.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2023*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**Aims & Objectives (Cont.)**

Utilising digital technology for both engagement of beneficiaries and sharing our work – whilst a necessity during the pandemic – has been a great success, giving us a new way to engage more diverse audiences and those experiencing barriers to access. For this reason, it has become a permanent evolution of our work.

**WHY we do what we do**

We are a purpose-driven organisation. Our work must be relevant to and matter in wider society and make a demonstrable and measurable difference to those we work with.

We recognise that the presence of positive and secure inter-personal relationships is a key factor in personal wellbeing, motivation, civil engagement and life fulfilment. We use drama and theatre-based approaches – inter-personal by nature – to support people to build the skills and knowledge to form and maintain better relationships. This work is positive action against the shift towards the divided, competitive and aggressive societal changes seen in the UK and wider world in recent years.

Through all of our work we advocate for, demonstrate and give people ways to form better relationships and learn how positive connection and shared positive experiences with one another can be used to prevent those things which drive us apart. Positive mental health and wellbeing outcomes are an integral part of our work. We use the ratified PERMA Framework as our approach to planning, monitoring and evaluating the impact of our work on wellbeing outcomes.

Our work helps people to bring about changes in behaviour and outlook, increasing in confidence, experiencing personal accomplishment, building their personal resilience, shaping a more positive self-image and setting themselves up for a more positive future.

We are working to create a society where everyone is motivated, engaged and able to bring their unique abilities to help make the world a little bit better. The problems of the world are essentially the problems of individuals. Through supporting individuals to change, together we may just be able to change the world.

**HOW we work**

We use high-quality drama and the process of making and performing theatre-based work as our primary tools for change. Our work explores contemporary concerns facing children and young people and the realities of the world we're living in right now – inviting positive change.

**We have 4 key values that shape everything we do:**

**1. CONTRIBUTING - *Everyone Matters***

Co-creation is at the centre of everything we do. All of our team and everyone we work with contributes to shaping our programmes and our activities, helping us to learn and make an impact.

Our activities are participatory, with ideas being supported, acted up and recognised from all involved. Our activities are an asset in the lives of the people we work with, making a positive contribution and influence in both grassroots and strategic multi-sector settings.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2023*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

We remain relevant to wider society, with our work making a positive and important contribution.

**2. GROWING - *Becoming more***

We are bold, ambitious and entrepreneurial. We embrace challenges and are not afraid of failure. We champion a *growth mindset* and constantly look to learn from others. We are committed to continuous reflection and development, supporting everyone with the right level of challenge to become more.

We receive feedback graciously and gratefully and use supportive and constructive ways to give and respond to feedback.

**3. WITH OTHERS - *Better Together***

Our activities bring people together – to achieve, to learn and to have fun – with curiosity, co-creation and kindness at the heart of everything we do. We seek out people to work with who know things that we do not, integrating ongoing input from our beneficiaries, artists and others we work with or whose work relates to our own. We prioritise working with partners who share our values and whose work has similar motivations.

We support the development of key interpersonal skills like empathy, teamwork and resilience for all who work with us. We care for one another, and this compassion helps us to build strong, lasting and fruitful relationships.

**4. AS OURSELVES - *Always authentic***

We create safe spaces which support and encourage everyone to be their authentic, imperfect selves - with individual strengths, vulnerabilities, lived experiences, emotions and needs. We recognise, respect and embrace our differences, understanding that this makes us all stronger, more empathetic and wiser.

We strive to meet the needs of everyone we work with, making sure our company is welcoming and inclusive to people from all walks of life. We create environments that are genuinely supportive and accessible, where everyone feels valued as an individual, and is enabled to contribute.

As a company, we do not copy or try to compete with others. We confidently walk our own path, and we seek to work with those who also value authenticity and openness.

**WHAT we do**

We have several programmes of activity. Each of them achieves a combination of the following objectives:

- Enable children and young people to co-create with professional artists, treating young people as artists in their own right
- Inspire people to make positive behavioural change through dynamic youth-led theatre productions, short films, creative digital assets and workshops
- Learn through working with multi-sector organisations, schools, individuals, and artists who share our values
- Co-construct drama and theatre-based approaches which enrich the provision within formal education settings, including training teachers and improve the personal, social, and educational outcomes of pupils
- Make dynamic, engaging, and relevant contemporary theatre for young audiences, especially those who are under-served

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2023*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

- Programme exciting theatre by other companies and artists – prioritise bringing this to under-served settings
- Raise the profile of artistic work produced by young people
- Improve mental health and wellbeing of beneficiaries, and embed this at all stages of projects
- Embody and champion inclusive approaches to co-creation, collaboration and creativity including providing a broad range of activities, working in person and digitally designed to accommodate a range of access needs (e.g. special educational needs, logistical, age-specific, low cost)
- Reduce barriers to taking part by using in person and digital engagement and producing our work in a range of settings, community buildings, schools, outdoor spaces, and professional theatre venues - prioritising areas of socio-economic disadvantage or rural isolation
- Create new pathways into participatory arts careers including work experience, internships, training, mentoring and employment
- Run practical skills training for multi-sector businesses supporting them to learn how to connect better interpersonally in the workplace, with clients and as leaders
- Provide opportunities for participants to work with a diverse range of dynamic professional artists and companies and other specialist practitioners
- Signpost young people to other available arts activities through our networks
- Provide training, mentoring and employment for young and/or early career participatory artists and practitioners, especially those working with young people

**OUR ACTIVITY PROGRAMMES**

**PROGRAMME 1: YOUTH THEATRE (objectives achieved are: a,b,e,g,h,i,j,m,n)**

**Youth Theatre**

A term-time programme of activities with 6 groups in West and South East Northumberland and online, providing a fun, safe and active environment where young people aged 7-19 explore their own lives and their wider world through drama and theatre. In these sessions, young people co-create dynamic, thought-provoking, original theatre alongside professional theatre artists - with the young people's ideas, emotions and experiences at the heart.

The 5 groups are –

- Tynedale, West Northumberland: Stage 2 (school years 3-6); Stage 3/4 (school years 7-11) and a resident Youth Theatre partnership with Highfield Middle School in Prudhoe, West Northumberland.
- Ashington, South East Northumberland: Stage 2 (school years 3-6); Stage 3/4 (school years 7-11)
- Online: drawing young people from across the North East region (school years 5-11)

**Ensemble Young Company**

This 5-month annual project (school years 10-13 and up to age 19) supports teenagers to co-create and tour original theatre in a process closely aligned with professional theatre production.

In 2022-23 we continued the delivery model for this project originally piloted last year, with young company members drawn from our two main operational locations. In 2022-23, we reintroduced out of region touring for this group.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2023*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**PROGRAMME 2: FUTURE READY (a,b,c,d,h,l,j,m,n)**

**Young Cultural Leaders**

Supporting young people in their broader personal development through social action projects, event management, Peer Facilitation training, volunteering and work experience. This includes opportunities to do higher level Arts Award qualifications.

**Creative Interventions**

Working with Education settings to use participation in creative activities to support young people to develop confidence, creative and social skills. Young people are referred into the groups by the host partner, using criteria like high levels of school absence, mental health or behavioural challenges or inter-sectional needs.

The structure is 12 weekly 2-hour sessions with an informal sharing at the end and young people completing an Arts Award qualification.

Current Creative Intervention partners are Duke's Secondary School in Ashington and Duchess Community High School in Alnwick.

**Cross-sector Partnerships**

Working with youth sector partners, we are testing co-delivery models combining creative practices with traditional youth work practice. The focus is on using a creative approach to develop employability, social action and leadership skills.

**PROGRAMME 3: Professional Theatre for young audiences (b,c,e,h,j)**

We work with professional theatre artists (writers, directors, actors, designers and production staff) to create social-change theatre that is relevant to the lives of our core beneficiaries.

**Melva**

A theatre production was originally produced for public performance in 2017. In 2019, we developed it into a live creative intervention package for children aged 7-11 in schools, in partnership with Children North East. The package supports children's, teachers' and parents' mental health education and strategies for self-management of worries and anxiety.

In 2021-22, we collaborated with Meerkat Films and Vida Creative to create *Melva Digital* – a two strand version of the original intervention programme, consisting of:

- Digital captured version of the original stage play – in three episodes
- Online storytelling game

This had a national launch to schools and family audiences in Autumn 2021.

In 2022-23, we began piloting commissioning relationships with multi-sector agencies and sponsorship packages with businesses to support the further development and distribution of the programme.

During the year, we were commissioned by Children North East (CNE) to co-create a new delivery programme using the Melva Digital resources called Worrit Warriors. The programme involved training CNE staff to deliver 6-week interventions in schools, targeting children at risk of suicidal ideation and self-harming behaviours with schools in Newcastle and Gateshead.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2023*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**PROGRAMME 4: CONNECT (b,h,l)**

This is our business training programme for multi-sector organisations, which generates earned income to subsidise our delivery with young people. The CONNECT training approach combines practice from actor training and theatre rehearsals with business thought leadership and social science content and research.

The CONNECT programme is a hybrid model of in person and online delivery and is a fast-growing strand of our work and income stream. In 2022-23, we received business development funding from North of Tyne Combined Authority and Creative UK to create a new Producer post, to support the growth and development of this strand of our work.

**PROGRAMME 5: Sector Development (c,d,f,g,l,j,k,n,o)**

**Co-Creation Exchange**

We lead a national network of committed cross-sector partners who each support the core aim of finding new ways of developing and advocating for high-quality drama-based approaches to working with young people in the North of England and beyond.

Through the network we use partnerships, skills and knowledge exchange and participatory activities to create high-quality and socially relevant theatre-focused opportunities for young people who face barriers to engagement. This includes touring our work to partner settings and hosting visits from them in ours.

**Creative Catalyst**

This strand of our work focuses on allyship for marginalised communities / groups and creative sector change through listening & learning pathways and career progression in the creative industries.

**Artist and Practitioner Development**

We are a sector leader in the North East in supporting professional cross-sector practitioners to develop their practice with, by and for children and young people. We do this by providing training, mentoring and employment opportunities for practitioners and theatre-based artists, with a particular emphasis on those who are early career stage.

**Entry Level Employment**

In 2022-23, we piloted a new full-time Marketing Assistant post, a combined position working for Mortal Fools and YMCA Northumberland. Next year, we intend to pilot two further entry level posts – Assistant Practitioner and Technical Assistant.

**PUBLIC BENEFIT**

The Trustees understand and have discussed the implications of the provisions of the Charities Act 2006, which state that all charities must demonstrate that they are established for public benefit, and have had due regard to the public benefit guidance issued by the Charity Commission. The Trustees believe that the charity meets both of the key principles.

Principle 1 - There must be an identifiable benefit, or benefits

Principle 2 - Benefit must be to the public, or a section of the public

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2023*

**PUBLIC BENEFIT (CONTINUED)**

The charity's principal public benefits are:

**1. Education and development of young people**

The charity's participatory arts activities focus on strengthening the social and emotional capabilities and mental health of young people – such things as confidence, resilience, creativity, communication, managing feelings, problem-solving, relationship-building, responsibility and perseverance, through participation in performance-based activities.

**2. Education and development of adults**

The charity delivers professional development skills workshops with adults that utilise similar approaches to those used with young people, but made bespoke for the particular setting -e.g. masterclasses in creative leadership and managing imposter syndrome.

**3. Events and plays for the general public**

The charity runs c. 20-30 events and plays per year with its various groups, which are delivered to a high standard and directed by paid professional staff. Those in partner settings are primarily for the young people, families, and staff associated with the setting. They also use community venues and / or in regional theatre venues for performances and events such as Gosforth Civic Theatre and YMCA Northumberland.

There is a safeguarding policy in place, which includes online working, and is reviewed at least annually. There is a lead trustee for safeguarding and they, together with staff members as Designated Safeguarding Officer and a deputy, are all trained with a Level 3 Safeguarding accreditation, refreshed annually.

All staff are required to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure, which are checked annually. Trustees will also have a DBS disclosure should they have direct contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

The main beneficiaries are:

- Children and young people aged 7-19 in North East England who attend our activities e.g. our Youth Theatre and Young Leaders groups. This includes both in-person and digital participation.
- Children and young people aged 7-19 in North East England who we work with in partnerships with other settings; arts, education or community organisations like in our Co-Creation Exchange and schools and our Melva programme. This includes national and international participants.
- Adults who participate in our work; artists and practitioners from other settings e.g. Youth Workers.
- Adults who participate in our professional development training – including national and international participants. This includes both in-person and digital participation.
- Members of the public who attend our performances and events. This includes both in-person and digital participation.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2023*

**PUBLIC BENEFIT (CONTINUED)**

We prioritise working with beneficiaries in locations of socio-economic disadvantage and rural isolation and which are under-served by cultural provision. In 2021, we established a new primary base in YMCA Northumberland in Ashington in South East Northumberland, a location which fits this description. From this base, we operate a satellite model of delivery including a secondary base in Prudhoe in west Northumberland and a growing number of residential partnerships with cross-sector partners.

**Risk Management**

The Trustees regularly review the major governance, operational and financial risks which the charity faces as part of its annual business planning process and confirm that systems have been established to mitigate these risks.

The charity has a comprehensive risk management framework. It comprises:

- an annual review of the strategic risks the charity may face via the business plan
- the establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

The Trustees are satisfied that appropriate financial systems and controls and employment policies and practices are in place. They consider the key risks facing the charity at this time to be:

- **Staffing Capacity** – Demand for the charity's services continues to increase, especially in key operational areas. While the core staff team has been increased, more is needed to maintain a high-quality and resilient delivery for beneficiaries. As it has been in the wider charitable, Arts and Youth sectors, recruitment of new staff is challenging with people reluctant to leave the security of current jobs and some unwillingness to work in locations outside of main towns and cities. As we have had most success with recruiting earlier career staff, we will continue to prioritise this in further recruitment and plan for the additional support this requires from more senior staff.
- **Escalated and changing needs of young people** – the Trustees recognise that the social, economic and political landscape in the UK is presenting many more challenges in young people's lives – cost of living crisis, post-pandemic legacy – and this is manifesting in increased mental health, emotional and behavioural challenges presented by the young people we work with. This presents more profound, complex and changeable challenges for the delivery team, requiring greater support from other staff and more drain on capacity.
- **Financial capacity to sustain increased liabilities** – At year end, the charity is in a good financial position, with a strong income-generation strategy to support ongoing resilience, but the Trustees recognise that sustaining itself successfully at a larger scale brings additional pressures, workload and risks. The Trustees also recognise that competition for grant income in the sector remains high.
- **Increased challenges faced by cross-sector partners**  
Because the current social, political and economic challenges in the UK affect the general population, we are seeing the effects manifest across our multi-sector partnerships, including high turnover of staff / struggles to recruit, pressures on delivery capacity to support partnership development and higher and more complex needs of young people.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2023*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

**Overview**

Mortal Fools has successfully accomplished another year of growth, supported more young people than ever before and continued to co-create brilliant artistic work with a growing diversity of young people in the North East region. We also celebrated the organisation's 10<sup>th</sup> birthday in June 2022.

Growing an organisation isn't easy and Mortal Fools has demonstrated considerable resilience and ingenuity throughout a challenging period for the cultural sector, pivoting our work to keep serving audiences with high-quality participatory arts opportunities, whilst learning and growing through the experience.

August 2022 saw us secure significant multi-year investment from Kavli Trust and we are set to join Arts Council England's National Portfolio of regularly funded organisations (NPO) from April 2023. This, together with ongoing support from many more funders we have strong, ongoing relationships with, had added to the growing resilience of the charity.

Becoming an Arts Council NPO begins a significant new chapter for us as a company on a national stage, amplifying the voices and needs of the young people we work with, alongside supporting the cultural renewal of the Northumberland towns we are based in. The county has great artistic and cultural heritage, but what excites us more is the vibrancy of the new artistic work being created by local artists, organisations and of course Northumberland young people.

The prospect of a new Creative Youth Hub for young people in Ashington and the surrounding area continues to move forward, having secured funding as part of wider Ashington Town Centre developments. Partnerships and strategic innovations like this will help us meet the ever-changing and more complex needs of young people.

We remain committed to fighting for better futures for young people, investing in their personal development through the delivery of life-enhancing experiences for our thousands of young beneficiaries, together with working with cross-sector partners to improve systems, services and settings that support young people.

We will continue to grow our groups by deepening collaboration with referral organisations and link workers to support even more young people facing challenges such as poor mental health, neuro-divergence and being looked after. Young people need *more* opportunities to use the arts to explore, understand and express their current experiences, questions, concerns and hopes, and Mortal Fools is committed to finding innovative ways to do this better and better for them, now and into the future.

*"Mortal Fools continued growth and success is fabulous news for Northumberland and for children and young people. As well as co-creating powerful theatre productions and films of resonance and relevance, they are an excellent and inspirational training agency working across many diverse sectors. This is testament to their clarity of vision and the effectiveness of their approach in supporting strong, dynamic individuals and the leaders of tomorrow."*

**Cultural Development Manager, Northumberland County Council**

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2023*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

In summary, in 2022-23, the charity:

- Worked directly with **1,316 young people** through our programmes, including deep to light engagements.
- Delivered activities for young people in **48 weeks** of the year.
- Delivered **392** weekly sessions to **237 young people** in Mortal Fools Youth Theatre, school & youth settings.
- Grown the membership of our Youth Theatre to a core group of **102 young people** including establishing two new regular groups in our new Ashington base.
- Had live audiences of **640 people**, digital audiences of **5123 people** with a total of **375593 people** engaging in our digital content.
- Achieved **2.4k views** on our YouTube totalling **80.1 hours watch time**
- Ran **51 young leader's sessions with 9 young people** engaging bi-weekly.
- Supported **92 young people** to achieve an **Arts Award** qualification, including **2 Gold and 2 Silver Arts Awards**.
- Created **24 short films & animations** with young people.
- Engaged approximately **640 young people in our Melva Digital** programme for mental health during the academic year 22/23.
- **Developed a Wellbeing Evaluation Toolkit** to integrate delivery practices to enhance young people's wellbeing into all our work, and generate quantitative data to demonstrate outcomes.
- Delivered **5 advocacy events** championing our work to multiple sectors and **to 170 stakeholders**.
- Delivered **51 CONNECT training interventions** and **engaged 952 training participants**.
- Contracted **23 freelance professionals** to work with us.
- Recruited two young people into paid assistant practitioner roles.
- Successfully applied to join Arts Council England's National Portfolio 2023-26.
- Were nominated for two awards - a North East Charity Award 2022 in the *Uniquely North East* Category and a National Diversity Award 2023 for our work championing young people's voices.
- Had work featured on BBC Look North showcasing the Creative Intervention projects with young people with intersectional needs funded by Children In Need.
- Had work featured in The Guardian, The Stage, North East Times, BDaily, North East Family Fun, High Life North and many other press publications.
- Continued to see and hear evidence of the positive impact our work is having on the children and young people we work with.

*"My son is diagnosed with ASD, selective mutism, he has generalised anxiety and over the last three years he has had periods of terrible depression. Mortal Fools have allowed him to be himself; they have a real gift for understanding children very quickly and making them feel good about themselves. They are very inclusive, and I can't thank them enough for the way in which they have made my son feel. It's very difficult to find groups that make a child who thinks they are different feel like everyone else. Mortal Fools is very unique and brings a great deal of hope to my family for sure and the area. We really appreciate Mortal Fools and their great team."* **Youth Theatre Parent**

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2023*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

The main creative projects this year were:

- Ensemble Young Company – **My People** – the launch of a series of short films exploring what it means to find your people, devised, written and performed by a company of young people during the pandemic, made in partnership with Meerkat Films.

*“The projects I’ve done this year are ones that have inspired me and have given me memories I will never forget”.* **Ensemble Young Company Member**

- Youth Theatre – **Come on In** – April – July 2022. Five groups of young people from our two operational bases devised short plays using the brilliant book by Northumberland writer, Charlie Macksey, ‘*The Boy, The Mole, The Fox, and The Horse*’ as source material and exploring what home means to us. The project culminated in a performance weekend at YMCA Northumberland.

*“The use of headphones was just so exciting for my 8 year old - she loved that element and they really helped her to focus and engage. The music was excellent, and the design was so clever.”* Come on In Audience Member

- Ensemble Young Company – **FLUX** – the production originally produced in Spring 22 was reworked with a new young company in Spring 2023, where it also recommenced our national touring to two partner organisations and venues in North West England.

*“The performance was great, it delivered a powerful message about being a young person, bringing to life the challenges, demands, excitement and angst of emergent adulthood. That the production was co-produced made it all the more meaningful. An interesting story, told well.”* Flux 2022 Audience Member

- Youth Theatre – **Fools Fest** – Autumn 2022. Six groups of young people devised a showcase of mini performances including improvisation, music, film and more, culminating in celebratory performances in our two base locations, Ashington and Prudhoe.

*“An enjoyably entertaining evening. We especially enjoyed the improvised sections - and bringing the audience in to choose themes, to show that the scenes were truly improvised by the young people on stage.”* Fools Fest Audience Member

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2023*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

**OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

- Continued our Creative Intervention partnership with Duchess Community High School in Alnwick, developed a new ongoing relationship with Duke's Secondary School in Ashington and piloted this model with Amble Youth Project.

*"The project has had a massive impact on some of our most vulnerable students. I have seen students who find it difficult to make friends, do just that. It has given our students the confidence to have a voice, even those who are very reluctant to speak in front of others.*

*Mortal Fools practitioners are very professional, extremely enthusiastic with a real interest in young people and encourage them every step of the way. The practitioners are so supportive and provide a safe and comfortable environment, allowing every individual to be themselves without worry of judgment. The positive impact Mortal Fools has had on our student's wellbeing has been transformational."* Staff member, Duchess's Community High School

- Joint employment of a Marketing Assistant with YMCA Northumberland, supporting someone at entry career level into their first creative role, and piloting a new model of employment with YMCA.
- Delivered outreach sessions with organisations like Birkheads Wild, NE Youth, Stepney Bank Stables and National Citizen Service. Concluded our partnership with Youth Focus North East, alongside 12 other regional youth organisations, employing young people as Peer Researchers over a 14-month period as part of the North East Peer Action Collective. The young people involved showcased their social action work at an event at Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art in November 2022.

**PARTNERSHIPS**

**Local Authority & Strategic:**

- Supporting Ashington Town Centre regeneration and capital developments alongside YMCA Northumberland, Northumberland County Council, Advance Northumberland, Ashington Town Board on a successful bid to central Government (£30mil raised in total).
- Northumberland County Council - working with the local authority and other county cultural organisations to deliver Cultural Strategy. Our SLA to lead the development of drama and theatre for young people in the county was renewed for 2023-26.
- Northumberland Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP) - Our CEO is the Chair of Northumberland LCEP group, an initiative established by Culture Bridge North East to deliver the Arts Council's Cultural Education Challenge at a sub-regional level. In 2022, they commenced an action research project testing the application of Mortal Fools' *Wellbeing Practice Guide and Toolkit* in four cultural education settings.
- Ashington Town Council – local funding support and advocacy.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2023*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

**PARTNERSHIPS (Cont.)**

**Voluntary Sector and Community-Based:**

- Children North East – commissioned to design and co-deliver *Worrit Warriors*, a 6-week intervention project for 16 schools in Newcastle and Gateshead, utilising our Melva Digital programme as a delivery structure to work with children at risk of self-harming behaviours. Funded by Newcastle and Gateshead ICB.
- Youth Focus North East, and 12 national partners – on *Peer Action Collective* project
- YMCA Northumberland – on shared employment and young people's programme development.

**PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS**

In the coming year, we will refocus our energies on how we can maximise the positive impact we are able to have on young people's lives. This will include how we support young people directly through working with them in our various activity programmes and how we can help drive positive change in other areas which affect them – for example education, support services, family life.

We will seek ways to utilise our position as an Arts Council National Portfolio organisation for positive change for young people, working as a vehicle and amplifier of their voices and experiences – especially as so many young people felt invisible and forgotten during the pandemic.

Our approach to this is similar to the previous year:

**Improving access to cultural provision through place-based working** – this will particularly focus on Ashington, working to build positive relationships with the local community and finding ways to better serve local audiences, including:

- Increasing audience development and our activity provision in the town with new events and groups
- Piloting joint delivery with youth organisations, especially YMCA Northumberland
- Working in strategic relationships with colleagues in Ashington Children's Community to address key local needs for children and young people
- Continue to work with strategic local partners to support next stages of Ashington town centre regeneration and development plans, including capital development of a new cultural hub premises for children and young people.
- Programming theatre, performances and events for public audiences, with a focus on children, young people, family and school audiences to test appetite for this work in Ashington and potential to support town centre regeneration through attracting visitor footfall.

**Embedding mental health outcomes across all our work**

We created a comprehensive *Wellbeing Practice Guide and Toolkit* using the ratified PERMA™ Framework last year, integrating its use across all our young people's programmes. Next year we will conclude its testing in four cultural education partnership settings, and develop the Toolkit further based on learning from these tests. We will also design and implement a staff *Culture Code* using a similar process, embedding mental health outcomes throughout our operations.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the year ended 31 March 2023*

**PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS (CONTINUED)**

**Improving Delivery Practice to meet growing inter-sectional needs of young people**

Post-pandemic, and in the continuing UK landscape of economic turmoil, we have seen an increase in inter-sectional needs amongst young people in our groups and settings, including increased poor mental health, more young people who are neuro-divergent, more young people experiencing poverty – and these are in settings experiencing other disadvantage like rural isolation and lack of services.

This year we will invest time and people resource in the development of our delivery practices in response to these needs. This will include senior / more experienced staff working alongside other staff in delivery settings, the creation of new internal training resources, and commissioning specialist training and consultancy support.

**Piloting new commissioning model for *Melva Digital***

We will integrate learning from this year into a reconfiguration and moderate redesign of the Melva Digital programme and online platform. We will take a new approach to distribution of the programme through a) commissioning partners buying licences at scale e.g. local authorities and b) through corporate sponsors, gifting programme licences to schools of their choosing as part of CSR work.

**Increase staffing capacity in key areas**

Our staffing model is functioning well, with some key gaps in capacity that we will work to fill in the coming year, namely:

- Producer/s – to project manage our growing portfolio of activity projects and partner relationships and to support with income generation.
- Marketing – to support with audience development and growing sales.
- Administration – to support general operations of a larger organisation.

**Governance development**

We recognise that present and effective governance is a key factor in charities remaining ethical and successful in challenging external climates. We will continue to invest in governance development, with the additional considerations of renewed requirements by the Charity Commission on charity governance, together with requirements from key funders like Arts Council England.

We will increase the resilience, skills and relevant experience of our Board through recruitment of new trustees, with a focus on appointing young people, local folks from our two main operational locations and key professional skills like HR, Education and Legal.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the year ended 31 March 2023*

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES**

The Trustees (who are also the Directors of Mortal Fools for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

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

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

Signed on behalf of the Trustees



**Richard Wise**  
**Trustee**  
**25 September 2023**

# **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS ON THE UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS OF MORTAL FOOLS LIMITED YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

I hereby report to the Trustees of Mortal Fools (Charity Registration Number 1153400) on my examination of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 set out on pages 22 to 38.

## **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity's Trustees (and also its directors for the purposes of company law), you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

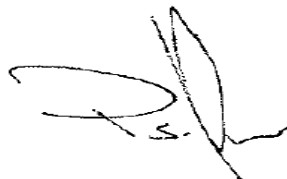
## **Independent Examiner's Statement**

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000, your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountant in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods or principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102)).

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.



**Pete O'Hara, FCA, Chartered Accountant  
Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales**

4 Stoneyhurst Road West, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1PG

25 September 2023

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
<b>Income</b>					
Income from Investments	3	1,241	-	1,241	85
Income from Charitable Activities	4	134,289	275,624	409,913	610,098
Income from Donations & Legacies	5	23,500	-	23,500	10,426
		<b>159,030</b>	<b>275,624</b>	<b>434,654</b>	<b>620,609</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Expenditure on Charitable Activities	6	142,140	350,253	492,393	382,441
		<b>142,140</b>	<b>350,253</b>	<b>492,393</b>	<b>382,411</b>
<b>Net Income/(Expenditure)</b>		<b>16,890</b>	<b>(74,629)</b>	<b>(57,739)</b>	<b>238,168</b>
Balance brought forward		122,584	324,599	447,183	209,015
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>£139,474</b>	<b>£249,970</b>	<b>£389,444</b>	<b>£447,183</b>

The notes on pages 24 to 38 form part of the financial statements.

All of the activities of the company are classed as continuing.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION/BALANCE SHEET**  
**AS AT 31 MARCH 2023**

	Notes	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2022 £
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Tangible Fixed Assets	9	13,125	18,908
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Debtors	10	159,650	218,786
Cash At Bank & In Hand		235,303	259,779
		<u>394,953</u>	<u>478,565</u>
<b>Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year</b>	11	(18,634)	(50,290)
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)		<u>376,319</u>	<u>428,275</u>
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	12	<u><b>£389,444</b></u>	<u><b>£447,183</b></u>
<b>Represented by:</b>			
Unrestricted Reserves	13	139,474	122,584
Restricted Reserves	13	249,970	324,599
		<u><b>£389,444</b></u>	<u><b>£447,183</b></u>

The notes on pages 24 to 38 form part of the financial statements.

The Trustees are satisfied that for the year ended 31 March 2023 the charity was entitled to exemption under section 477(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees also confirm that the Members have not required the charity to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

(i) ensuring that the charity keeps adequate accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act, and

(ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charity.

**These financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 25 September 2023 and signed on their behalf:**



**Richard Wise**  
**Trustee**  
**Company Registration Number 08102487**

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**1. Accounting Policies**

**Basis of Preparation**

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable United Kingdom accounting standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 – 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland' ('FRS 102'), and with the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, modified to include certain financial instruments at fair value.

Advantage has been taken of the provisions in the SORP for Charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a statement of cashflows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity.

**Income**

All income is included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income, any performance related conditions attached have been met or are fully within the control of the charity, the income is considered probable and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Donations and legacy income is received by way of donations, legacies, grants and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Where legacies have been notified to the charity but the criteria for income recognition have not been met, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.
- Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.
- Investment income is included when receivable.
- Income from charitable trading activity is accounted for when earned.
- Other income is accounted for when receivable.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**1. Accounting Policies (Continued)**

**Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:

- Costs of raising funds comprise the costs associated with attracting donations, grants and legacies and the costs of trading for fundraising purposes.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
- Other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

**Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation**

Depreciation is provided on any fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the assets over their remaining useful lives as follows:

- IT Equipment - 33% per annum straight line
- Office Equipment – 25% per annum straight line

A full year's depreciation charge is applied in the year of acquisition and no charge is made in the year of disposal.

**Impairment of Fixed Assets**

A review for indicators of impairment is carried out at each reporting date, with the recoverable amount being estimated where such indicators exist. Where the carrying value exceeds the recoverable amount, the asset is impaired accordingly. Prior impairments are also reviewed for possible reversal at each reporting date.

**Financial Instruments**

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the charity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs.

Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted.

Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost where there is a material adjustment.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**1. Accounting Policies (Continued)**

**Fund Accounting**

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the purposes of the charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for specific purposes.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

**Taxation Status**

Mortal Fools is a Charity registered under the 1960 Charities Act and is accorded exemption from liability to taxation on its income under S505 Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988.

**Going Concern**

There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

**Judgements and Key Sources of Estimation Uncertainty**

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

There are no significant judgements or estimation uncertainty included within the financial statements.

**2. Legal Status**

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.

**3. Income from Investments**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Interest on cash deposits	1,241	-	1,241	85
	<b>£1,241</b>	<b>£-</b>	<b>£1,241</b>	<b>£85</b>

The 2022 total of £85 relates wholly to Unrestricted Funds.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**4. Income from Charitable Activities**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Grant Income</b>				
#iwill Fund at the CFTWN	-	10,000	10,000	-
Arnold Clark Community Fund	-	1,000	1,000	1,000
Arts Council England	-	-	-	196,995
BBC Children In Need	-	30,570	30,570	-
BBC Children In Need Youth Social Action Fund	-	26,000	26,000	-
Bernicia Foundation	10,000		10,000	-
Co-op Local Community Fund	3,268		3,268	-
Culture Bridge North East	-			40,498
Curtin PARP Fund at the CFTWN	-	(12,283)	(12,283)	15,000
DCMS Youth Investment Fund	-	-	-	20,114
Garfield Weston Foundation	25,000	-	25,000	25,000
High Sheriff of Northumberland Youth Against Crime Award Scheme at the CFTWN	1,000	-	1,000	1,000
Ironmongers' Company	-	4,411	4,411	-
John D Endowment Fund at the CFTWN	-	2,500	2,500	-
Kavli Trust	-	105,012	105,012	-
Kerry Grassroots at the CFTWN	-	4,987	4,987	-
Key Fund Federation	-	168	168	-
Lady Betty Martin Fund at the CFTWN	-	5,000	5,000	1,500
Muckle at the CFTWN	-	3,000	3,000	-
National Lottery Awards For All	-	10,000	10,000	-
National Lottery Community Fund (RC North East and Cumbria Region) in partnership with the Ballinger Charitable Trust	-	10,000	10,000	-
North East Fund For The Arts at the CFTWN	-	-	-	1,000
North of Tyne Creative England	-	12,500	12,500	-
Northern Powergrid Fund at the CFTWN	-	-	-	5,750
Northumberland Children's Trust	-	5,000	5,000	-
Northumberland County Council	-	9,721	9,721	9,633
Northumberland County Council Community Chest	-	5,000	5,000	-

Continued overleaf...

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**4. Income from Charitable Activities (Cont.)**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Grant Income (Cont.)</b>				
Northumberland County Council Hadrian's Wall 1990	-	4,999	4,999	-
Northumberland Public Health: Creative Northumberland	-	9,999	9,999	9,999
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	-	-	-	210,000
Prime & Spriggs Family Fund at the CFTWN	-	4,965	4,965	-
Prime Fund at the CFTWN	-	-	-	5,000
Prudhoe Town Council	-	-	-	2,000
Ridley Family Charity at the CFTWN	-	3,000	3,000	-
Rothley Trust	-	-	-	1,000
Sir James Knott Trust	10,000	-	10,000	-
The Joicey Trust	-	-	-	3,400
Virgin Money Foundation	-	-	-	500
Wellesley Trust Fund at the CFTWN	10,000	-	10,000	-
	<b>59,268</b>	<b>255,549</b>	<b>314,817</b>	<b>549,389</b>
<b>Earned Income</b>				
Box Office Takings	1,734	-	1,734	628
Drama Session Fees	13,754	-	13,754	980
Partner Contributions	9,058	20,075	29,133	7,989
Refreshment & Other Sundry Sales	1,136	-	1,136	116
Service/Producer Fees	-	-	-	15,890
Training Fees	49,339	-	49,339	35,106
	<b>75,021</b>	<b>20,075</b>	<b>95,096</b>	<b>60,709</b>
	<b>£134,289</b>	<b>£275,624</b>	<b>£409,913</b>	<b>£610,098</b>

Of the 2022 total of £610,098, £191,715 relates to Unrestricted Funds and £418,383 to Restricted Funds.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**5. Income from Donations & Legacies**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2023 £	2022 £
Donations & Gift Aid	13,265	-	13,265	7,468
Theatre Tax Relief	10,235	-	10,235	2,958
	<b>£23,500</b>	<b>£-</b>	<b>£23,500</b>	<b>£10,426</b>

The 2022 total of £10,426 relates wholly to Unrestricted Funds.

**6. Total Expenditure on Charitable Activities**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Production &amp; Activity Costs</b>				
Salaries & On Costs	92,067	236,457	328,524	243,215
Freelance Project Worker Fees	5,404	27,485	32,889	45,364
Production, Hire & Staging Costs	4,756	37,120	41,876	21,454
Design, Print & Promotional Materials	10,042	16,818	26,860	19,316
<b>Support Costs</b>				
Central Staffing Costs - Freelance Team	-	-	-	6,900
Administrative Costs	24,665	19,196	43,861	24,450
Consultancy Fees	-	-	-	5,342
Staff Training	988	2,343	3,331	3,659
Depreciation	347	10,834	11,181	9,829
<b>Governance Costs</b>				
Accountancy & Payroll Fees	3,219	-	3,219	2,040
Board Costs	-	-	-	560
Legal & Professional	652	-	652	312
	<b>£142,140</b>	<b>£350,253</b>	<b>£492,393</b>	<b>£382,441</b>

Of the 2022 total of £382,441, £163,482 relates to Unrestricted Funds and £218,959 to Restricted Funds.

**7. Net Movement in Funds**

	2023 £	2022 £
The net movement in Funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Depreciation of Owned Fixed Assets	11,181	9,829
Independent Examiner's Fees – Independent Examination	900	900
Independent Examiner's Fees – Other Services	-	1,140

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**8. Staff Costs & Directors' Remuneration**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Gross Salary Costs	300,115	224,172
Employer's National Insurance	20,133	13,238
Employer's Pension Contributions	8,276	5,805
	<b>£328,524</b>	<b>£243,215</b>

No employee received remuneration of more than £60,000 during the year (2022: Nil).

The average number of staff employed during the year, calculated as full-time equivalents, was as follows:

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>No.</b>	<b>No.</b>
Artistic Production and Support	11	11

No remuneration was paid to any Trustees in the year.

No travel and subsistence expenses were reimbursed to Trustees in respect of their attendance at meetings of the charity (2022: £Nil).

**9. Tangible Fixed Assets**

	<b>IT &amp; Office Equipment</b>	<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Cost</b>		
At 1 April 2022	31,799	31,799
Additions in year	5,398	5,398
At 31 March 2023	<u>37,197</u>	<u>37,197</u>
<b>Accumulated Depreciation</b>		
At 1 April 2022	12,891	12,891
Charge for year	11,181	11,181
At 31 March 2023	<u>24,072</u>	<u>24,072</u>
<b>Net Book Value</b>		
At 31 March 2023	<u><b>£13,125</b></u>	<u><b>£13,125</b></u>
At 1 April 2022	<u>£18,908</u>	<u>£18,908</u>

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**10. Debtors**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Trade Debtors	22,726	-
Other Debtors	12,998	-
Accrued Income	119,159	214,711
Prepayments	4,767	4,075
	<b>£159,650</b>	<b>£218,786</b>

All sums are due within 1 year.

**11. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Trade Creditors	7,291	23,316
Other Taxes & Social Security Costs	7,239	6,370
Other Creditors - Pension Contributions Due	1,381	1,176
Other Creditors - Net Salaries Due	-	18,108
Other Creditors	40	-
Accruals	2,683	1,320
	<b>£18,634</b>	<b>£50,290</b>

**12. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Fixed Assets	687	12,438	13,125	18,908
Debtors	28,001	131,649	159,650	218,786
Cash at Bank and In Hand	129,420	105,883	235,303	259,779
Creditors – Due Within 1 Year	(18,634)	-	(18,634)	(50,290)
	<b>£139,474</b>	<b>£249,970</b>	<b>£389,444</b>	<b>£447,183</b>

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**13. Analysis of Charitable Funds**

	Fund at 1 April 2022 £	Income in Year £	Expenditure in Year £	Fund at 31 March 2023 £
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>				
Charity General Fund	122,584	159,030	(142,140)	139,474
<b>Restricted Funds</b>				
#iWill Social Action Fund at the Community Foundation for Tyne & Wear and Northumberland (CFTWN)	-	10,000	-	10,000
1989 Willan Charitable Trust at the CFTWN	4,040	-	(4,040)	-
Arnold Clark Community Fund	-	1,000	(1,000)	-
Arts Council England National Lottery Project Grants (ACE PG): Co-Creation Exchange	50,446	-	(31,452)	18,994
ACE PG: Future Ready 2020 Development	12,199	-	(12,199)	-
ACE PG: When This Is Over	738	-	(738)	-
ACE PG: Young People's Theatre Exchange 2019-21	3,464	-	(3,464)	-
BBC Children In Need	-	30,570	(23,858)	6,712
BBC Children In Need Youth Social Action Fund	-	26,000	(2,600)	23,400
Culture Bridge North East (CBNE) via CFTWN	1,500	-	(1,500)	-
CBNE: Capacity Building	6,000	-	(1,000)	5,000
CBNE: Partnership Investment (PI)	32,998	11,500	(21,932)	22,566
Curtin PARP Fund at the CFTWN	14,000	(12,283)	(1,717)	-
DCMS Youth Investment Fund	13,232	-	(13,232)	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	435	-	(435)	-
High Sheriff of Northumberland Youth Against Crime Scheme at the CFTWN	1,000	-	(1,000)	-

Continued overleaf...

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**13. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)**

	Fund at 1 April 2022 £	Income in Year £	Expenditure in Year £	Fund at 31 March 2023 £
Ironmongers' Company	-	4,411	-	4,411
John D Endowment Fund at the CFTWN	-	2,500	(2,500)	-
Kavli Trust	-	105,012	(50,179)	54,833
Kerry Grassroots at the CFTWN	-	4,987	(2,385)	2,602
Key Fund Federation	-	168	(168)	-
Lady Betty Martin Fund at the CFTWN	-	5,000	(5,000)	-
Muckle at the CFTWN	-	3,000	-	3,000
National Lottery Awards For All	-	10,000	(10,000)	-
National Lottery Community Fund (RC North East and Cumbria Region) in partnership with the Ballinger Charitable Trust	-	10,000	(10,000)	-
North East Fund For The Arts at the CFTWN	500	-	(500)	-
Northern Powergrid Fund at the CFTWN	4,950	-	(4,950)	-
North of Tyne Creative England	-	12,500	(6,178)	6,322
Northumberland Children's Trust	-	5,000	(5,000)	-
Northumberland County Council (NCC): Arts and Heritage SLA	450	9,721	(10,080)	91
NCC: Community Chest Scheme	4,633	5,000	(4,696)	4,937
NCC: Match Funding to support Creative Northumberland	5,000	-	(5,000)	-
NCC: Hadrian's Wall 1990	-	4,999	(4,999)	-
Northumberland Public Health: Creative Northumberland	9,999	9,999	-	19,998
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	140,102	-	(78,664)	61,438

Continued overleaf...

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**13. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)**

	Fund at 1 April 2022 £	Income in Year £	Expenditure in Year £	Fund at 31 March 2023 £
Prime Fund	4,698	-	(4,698)	-
Prime & Spriggs Family Fund at the CFTWN	-	4,965	-	4,965
Ridley Family Charity at the CFTWN	-	3,000	(2,633)	367
Rothley Trust	890	-	(556)	334
The Joicey Trust	3,400	-	(3,400)	-
Wellesley Trust Fund at the CFTWN	7,964	-	(7,964)	-
Youth Focus North East Partner Contribution	1,961	8,575	(10,536)	-
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>324,599</b>	<b>275,624</b>	<b>(350,253)</b>	<b>249,970</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>£447,183</b>	<b>£434,654</b>	<b>£(492,393)</b>	<b>£389,444</b>

**Name of Restricted Fund**

**Purpose & Allocation of the Restricted Fund**

<b>Cross-Project / Core Funds</b>	
<i>Paul Hamlyn Foundation (Arts Access and Participation Fund)</i>	Contribution to staff salaries, with the aim of helping the organisation to improve its staff structure, develop its practice and support socially excluded young people.
<i>Kavli Trust</i>	Towards Melva, Future Ready and Core Funding, to support creative interventions using theatre and performance-based approaches to support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.
<i>BBC Children in Need</i>	Towards core programme costs associated with supporting Young People with intersectional needs.
<i>DCMS Youth Investment Fund / Rothley Trust</i>	For the purchase of digital equipment and resources to enable the charity to reach more young people and provide a better service to them including hybrid (in person and online) sessions.

Continued overleaf...

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

13. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)

Name of Restricted Fund	Purpose & Allocation of the Restricted Fund
<b>Cross-Project / Core Funds</b>	
<i>N'land CC Community Chest Scheme</i>	For the purchase of office and IT equipment for new Ashington office base, followed by support in purchasing technical theatre equipment for activity in Northumberland.
<i>Garfield Weston Foundation</i>	Towards core running costs.
<i>Lady Betty Martin Fund within the North East Fund for the Arts</i>	Towards core costs of creative workshops to disadvantaged young people in Ashington and the wider area.
<i>N'land CC Arts and Heritage SLA / Northumberland Children's Trust</i>	Towards core running costs related to activity taking place in or with young people from Northumberland.
<i>Ridley Family Charity at CFTWN</i>	Towards office set up in Ashington.
<i>1989 Willan Charitable Trust / The Wellesley Trust / ACE PG Future Ready 2020 Development</i>	<p>Towards activity strands designed to use theatre and creative arts to develop confidence, aspirations and social and emotional skills of young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those living in areas of socio-economic deprivation, including <a href="#">Future Ready</a>, youth theatre activity in Ashington, and practice/sector development work.</p> <p>All funds were received before the Covid-19 pandemic, so project plans and deliverables have been adapted and completed in agreement with grant funders since first received.</p>
<b>Project-Specific Funds</b>	
<i>Northern Powergrid</i>	Towards the cost of our <a href="#">Young Cultural Leaders</a> programme and associated social action events/activities.
<i>ACE PG When This Is Over</i>	Towards the cost of <a href="#">When This Is Over</a> , and related outreach/partnership work.
<i>ACE PG Young People's Theatre Exchange</i>	Towards the cost of outreach and partnership work relating to our 'My People' films, within the Young People's Theatre Exchange Network.

Continued overleaf...

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**13. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)**

Name of Restricted Fund	Purpose & Allocation of the Restricted Fund
<b>Project-Specific Funds</b>	
<i>National Lottery Community Fund (RC North East and Cumbria Region) in partnership with the Ballinger Charitable Trust</i>	Towards the cost of producing 'Fools Fest', a devised theatre and performance project by Mortal Fools Youth Theatre, with live public performances in Ashington and Prudhoe.
<i>BBC Children in Need Youth Social Action Fund / #iWill Social Action Fund at CFTWN</i>	Towards the cost of developing and embedding youth-led social action within Mortal Fools Youth Theatre, including running weekly sessions, community outreach sessions, and creation of social action focused creative outputs.
<i>Creative England Ltd (North of Tyne Culture and Creative Investment Programme)</i>	Towards support of full time income generation Producer role.
<i>Muckle at CFTWN</i>	Towards the cost of providing 5 schools with Melva licenses, to support pupils' mental health and wellbeing.
<i>National Lottery Awards for All / Arnold Clark Community Fund</i>	Towards the cost of producing 'Come on In' – a devised theatre performance project by Mortal Fools Youth Theatre focusing on community wellbeing (Previously titled 'Joy').
<i>Newcastle City Council: Hadrian's Wall 1990</i>	Towards Fool's Fest and related work – specifically for the community performance event held in the Tyne Valley, exploring the themes surrounding the Saturnalia Festival.
<i>Prime &amp; Spriggs Family Fund / John D Endowment Fund / both at CFTWN</i>	Towards the costs of running Stage 2 Mortal Fools Youth Theatre group in Ashington.
<i>North East Fund for the Arts</i>	Towards the cost of delivering outreach workshops and Peer Facilitator training with Gateshead based youth organisations.
<i>Culture Bridge North East via CFTWN</i>	Towards the cost of piloting Mortal Fools as a resident theatre company at Highfield Middle School.
<i>Culture Bridge North East Partnership Funding / Northumberland CC Creative Northumberland Match Funding / Northumberland Public Health</i>	Towards the cost of <i>Creative Northumberland</i> , a collaborative project between schools and cultural organisations testing the impact of cultural activity on wellbeing. Mortal Fools are acting as budget holders for this project on behalf of the <u>Northumberland LCEP</u> .

Continued overleaf...

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**13. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)**

<b>Name of Restricted Fund</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Allocation of the Restricted Fund</b>
<i>Culture Bridge North East: Capacity Building</i>	To fund a dedicated Producer for <i>Creative Northumberland</i> .
<i>Ironmongers' Company</i>	Towards Creative Interventions in Schools (Future Ready Education).
<i>Key Fund Federation</i>	Supporting a group of Young Leaders to complete their first Key Project.
<i>Curtin PARP fund</i>	Towards the costs of a discreet project with a Youth Sector partner focusing on Arts Award Delivery.  The remaining balance was repaid in the year, after negotiation with grant manager because the disruption caused by Covid-19 pandemic and the challenges currently facing the youth sector meant we would be unable to achieve the necessary level and quantity of Arts Award Qualifications required by the funder.
<i>Prime Fund at CFTWN</i>	Towards the cost of piloting 2 x new youth theatre groups in Ashington between Feb – July 2022.
<i>ACE PG Co-Creation Exchange / The Joicey Trust / High Sheriff Northumberland Youth Against Crime Scheme (2022) / Kerry Grassroots at CFTWN</i>	Towards the cost of the <u>Co-Creation Exchange Network</u> and Ensemble Young Company group, including: the co-creation and production of the original <u>FLUX</u> live performance in Ashington (2022); the filming and distribution of digital version of the show; the updated and re-worked <u>FLUX tour</u> (2023); related outreach work; and cross-sector development work.
<i>Youth Focus North East</i>	Towards the cost of employing a Peer Researcher and participating in the North East <u>Peer Action Collective</u> .

**14. Related Party Transactions**

There were no related party transactions during this year.

**15. Taxation**

The company is a registered charity and no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023***

**16. Financial Commitments**

No material financial commitments have been made in respect of future financial years.

**17. Company Limited by Guarantee**

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

There are currently 10 members of the company (2022: 6).

**MORTAL FOOLS**

England & Wales - Charity number 1153400

---

# Accounts

---

Company Registration Number 08102487

Registered Charity Number 1153400

# **MORTAL FOOLS**

(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

## **REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**

**For the year ending 31 March 2022**



**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2022*

**NOTE FROM THE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES**

The last 12 months have been another exciting and progressive period for Mortal Fools. Although the pandemic is theoretically less of a threat, it has and will continue to have a long tail of influence on the sector and how we behave. In the last financial period (16 months to April 2021) our focus was initially one of pivoting, looking for opportunities out of adversity. Our resilience and agility served us well at that time and enabled us to continue to provide high quality services for our beneficiaries and have demonstrable positive impact on young people's lives.

We made an important decision earlier in the year to move the centre of our operations to Ashington, while continuing to sustain our connections and deliver in the Prudhoe area where we began our work. This move has increased our reach and we now sit in the heart of two communities that are under-served, with early evidence demonstrating that we are offering something of real value to the lives of young people in both settings. We have continued to diversify our content and, through our inventiveness, reach a larger and more diverse audience, beyond these geographical locations.

The opportunity to team up with and operate in the same building as YMCA Northumberland has already paid significant dividends. In future years, this is likely to result in further step changes for Mortal Fools. If county-wide initiatives are successful, they could lead to the realisation of our ultimate ambitions: to operate from our own purpose built, state of the art, fit for purpose premises.

The landscape of what confronts young people continues to change and as such we need to remain relevant. To this end we have expanded the board, increased its diversity and skill set and we are looking to institute further change by the introduction of young people as trustees on the board in the coming year.

The vision we set out several years ago, the organisational change we have embarked upon, improvements in our forward planning, governance and risk management have enabled us to fill substantive posts that we mapped out as part of our forward plan. This has been recognised by funders and given us the confidence to seek longer term cyclical funding from organisations such as the Kavli Trust and our recent application to the Arts Council for NPO funding. This does bring with it greater risk and we are realistic enough to appreciate that competition for funding in this arena is intense and may at times stretch our capacity.

We rely on the tenacity and at times monumental efforts of the Mortal Fools core team and board of trustees for our continued success. The pace at which we work has, at times, seemed overwhelming this year, so careful management of staff wellbeing has been a key success factor, working to provide unrivalled working conditions. This has been recognised with accolades like the *Good Work Pledge – Advanced Level Award* from North of Tyne Combined Authority.

We believe we have created an organisational culture of deep trust and a common belief that we are on path we all believe in and the commitment of all staff and associates to serve our beneficiaries is very evident. On behalf of the Board, I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the team and its leadership for another extraordinary year.



Richard Wise  
Chair of Trustees

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2022*

The Trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the 12 month period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

<b>Registered charity name</b>	Mortal Fools
<b>Charity registration number</b>	1153400
<b>Company registration number</b>	08102487
<b>Registered office</b>	YMCA Northumberland, North View, Ashington, NE63 9XQ

**Trustees**

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

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

Mr R Wise (Chair)	
Ms R Pattinson	
Ms A Dixon	Resigned 16 December 2021
Mrs R A K Barclay	
Miss K Stanforth	
Ms S Spencer	
Mr P Douglas	Appointed 25 November 2021
<b>Company Secretary</b>	Ms A Dixon (to 26 March 2020 to 16 December 2021) Ms K Crosbie (from 16 December 2021 to 24 January 2022) Ms S Allen (from 24 January 2022)
<b>Bankers</b>	Triodos Bank, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AS
<b>Independent Examiner</b>	Mr P O'Hara FCA, 4 Stoneyhurst Road West, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1PG

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2022*

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

**Governing Documents**

Mortal Fools is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 12 June 2012, as Northern Arts Enterprises Limited, and registered as a charity on 14 August 2013.

It was established under the Memorandum of Association that established its objects and powers and is governed under its Articles of Association, as amended by special resolutions registered at Companies House on 5 July 2012, 3 September 2012, 8 August 2013, 12 May 2016, 22 February 2018 and 1 December 2020.

The Directors of the company are also Trustees of the charity.

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

**Charitable Purpose**

Mortal Fools charitable objects are for the benefit of the public particularly but not exclusively in the north of England, through the teaching, practice and showcasing of the arts in all their forms:

- (1) To help children and young people develop their skills, capacity and capabilities to enable them to participate fully in society as responsible, mature and fulfilled individuals;
- (2) To advance the mental health education of children, young people, their significant adults and the general public to improve mental wellbeing;
- (3) To promote, support and improve the social inclusion of children and young people who are socially excluded by providing them with opportunities to access activities and develop their skills and experiences in such a way that they are better able to participate more fully in society;

For the purposes of this clause 'socially excluded' means children and young people (up to aged 25) who are excluded from society, or parts of society (like social circles) as a result of one or more of the following factors: socio-economic circumstances; race; gender; poor educational or skills attainment; mental health; disability; bullying and harassment and ethnic origin.

- (4) To maintain, improve, and advance arts education of children and young people, professional artists and the general public.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2022*

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)**

The charity currently has six Trustees. This year, the charity has continued its governance development with a skills audit and subsequent training of trustees by external providers, with a focus on Safeguarding, Mental Health and Equality and Diversity and Inclusion.

The Board meets a minimum of five times per year, including at least one full away day for strategic planning. Meetings take place using a blend of digital platforms and in person and throughout this year were monthly to allow the Board to provide better governance and support to staff during the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2022, these returned to bi-monthly whole board business meetings and in the next year, we are introducing a new structure of three Board Sub-Groups to provide support in key areas of operation. The groups are:

- Finance, Audit and Risk (FAR) – financial management / risk register and general risk notes / legal compliance
- Artistic / Delivery / Practice (ADP) – partnerships / participants / audiences / activity programmes / creative-based training
- People – HR / policies, procedures and systems / training / systems

Detailed written reports and an agenda are prepared by Trustees and senior staff and circulated in advance of Board meetings, integrating notes from sub-group meetings.

The charity is working on board development to increase representation of key community stakeholder groups in governance and improve the diversity of trustees. Trustee recruitment was delayed from 2021 and is now scheduled for Autumn 2022. It will focus on engaging community representatives from key locations, young people, people who have experienced poverty and those working with young people in key partnership settings e.g. Education, Youth and Health.

The charity is in early stages of developing a new trustee training programme for young artists to join cultural boards in partnership with Curious Arts and Community Foundation of Tyne & Wear and Northumberland.

**Appointment and Induction of Trustees**

Trustees are elected to the Board based on discussions and recommendations offered by Trustees and external advisors to the organisation. Following an informal discussion with the Chair and / or CEO, there is a two-stage application process of letter and CV followed by an interview with at least two Trustees.

New Trustees are inducted by a Trustee buddy and senior staff, supported by a comprehensive written Trustee Induction Pack including a range of resources to support their understanding of their role and the charity's activities.

**Reserves Policy**

The Trustees have reviewed the charity's needs for reserves in line with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2022*

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)**

**Reserves Policy (Cont.)**

The Trustees aim to hold a level of Unrestricted Reserves which enables the charity to have sufficient financial resources to meet various liabilities which would crystallise if Mortal Fools were unable to continue operating, together with an allowance to enable the charity to respond flexibly to issues or appropriate initiatives which might be identified outside of its annual budgeting process.

At present, the Trustees estimate that the Unrestricted Reserves required to cover all known liabilities amount to approximately £90,000. The trustees recognise that these liabilities will increase with the addition of new posts in the next year and therefore consider that a further contingency of at least £10,000 is prudent, resulting in a target level of Unrestricted Reserves in the region of £100,000. Mortal Fools currently holds Unrestricted Reserves of £122,584 at 31 March 2022, £121,551 of which are defined as 'free Reserves'.

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

**Grant-making**

The charity does not currently engage in grant-making activity.

**Contribution of Volunteers**

The charity makes limited use of volunteers within its productions and to support its activities.

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

**Aims & Objectives**

Mortal Fools' purpose is to support people to have better quality inter-personal relationships with one another and to use theatre and drama-based activities as the methodology to achieve this.

We are a company of participatory artists and practitioners who are committed to co-creating compelling, dynamic, socially-relevant and high-quality theatre-based work with children, young people and communities.

We work with 1,000s of children and young people every year, mostly in the North East. We develop our skills, knowledge and approach through dynamic multi-sector partnerships (Youth, Community, Health and Arts and Culture), jointly co-constructing work to meet the contemporary needs of children and young people.

We are champions of theatre produced by young people and for young people, we advocate for this work to be recognised and supported as an important art form in our sector, touring our work nationally, supporting participatory artists to train in co-creation and embedding achieving positive wellbeing outcomes across all our work.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2022*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**Aims & Objectives (Cont.)**

Utilising digital technology for both engagement of beneficiaries and sharing our work – whilst a necessity during the pandemic – has been a great success, giving us a new way to engage more diverse audiences and those experiencing barriers to access. For this reason, it has become a permanent evolution of our work.

**WHY we do what we do**

We are a purpose-driven organisation. Our work must be relevant to and matter in wider society and make a demonstrable and measurable difference to those we work with.

We recognise that the presence of positive and secure inter-personal relationships is a key factor in personal wellbeing, motivation, civil engagement and life fulfilment. We use drama and theatre-based approaches – inter-personal by nature – to support people to build the skills and knowledge to form and maintain better relationships. This work is positive action against the shift towards the divided, competitive and aggressive societal changes seen in the UK and wider world in recent years.

Through all of our work we advocate for, demonstrate and give people ways to form better relationships and learn how positive connection and shared positive experiences with one another can be used to prevent those things which drive us apart. Positive mental health and wellbeing outcomes are an integral part of our work. We use the ratified PERMA Framework as our approach to planning, monitoring and evaluating the impact of our work on wellbeing outcomes.

Our work helps people to bring about changes in behaviour and outlook, increasing in confidence, experiencing personal accomplishment, building their personal resilience, shaping a more positive self-image and setting themselves up for a more positive future.

We are working to create a society where everyone is motivated, engaged and able to bring their unique abilities to help make the world a little bit better. The problems of the world are essentially the problems of individuals. Through supporting individuals to change, together we may just be able to change the world.

**HOW we work**

We use high-quality drama and the process of making and performing theatre-based work as our primary tools for change. Our work explores contemporary concerns facing children and young people and the realities of the world we're living in right now – inviting positive change.

**We have 4 key values that shape everything we do:**

**1. CONTRIBUTING - *Everyone Matters***

Co-creation is at the centre of everything we do. All of our team and everyone we work with contributes to shaping our programmes and our activities, helping us to learn and make an impact.

Our activities are participatory, with ideas being supported, acted up and recognised from all involved. Our activities are an asset in the lives of the people we work with, making a positive contribution and influence in both grassroots and strategic multi-sector settings.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2022*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

We remain relevant to wider society, with our work making a positive and important contribution.

**2. GROWING - *Becoming more***

We are bold, ambitious and entrepreneurial. We embrace challenges and are not afraid of failure. We champion a *growth mindset* and constantly look to learn from others. We are committed to continuous reflection and development, supporting everyone with the right level of challenge to become more.

We receive feedback graciously and gratefully and use supportive and constructive ways to give and respond to feedback.

**3. WITH OTHERS - *Better Together***

Our activities bring people together – to achieve, to learn and to have fun – with curiosity, co-creation and kindness at the heart of everything we do. We seek out people to work with who know things that we do not, integrating ongoing input from our beneficiaries, artists and others we work with or whose work relates to our own. We prioritise working with partners who share our values and whose work has similar motivations.

We support the development of key interpersonal skills like empathy, teamwork and resilience for all who work with us. We care for one another, and this compassion helps us to build strong, lasting and fruitful relationships.

**4. AS OURSELVES - *Always authentic***

We create safe spaces which support and encourage everyone to be their authentic, imperfect selves - with individual strengths, vulnerabilities, lived experiences, emotions and needs. We recognise, respect and embrace our differences, understanding that this makes us all stronger, more empathetic and wiser.

We strive to meet the needs of everyone we work with, making sure our company is welcoming and inclusive to people from all walks of life. We create environments that are genuinely supportive and accessible, where everyone feels valued as an individual, and is enabled to contribute.

As a company, we do not copy or try to compete with others. We confidently walk our own path, and we seek to work with those who also value authenticity and openness.

**WHAT we do**

We have several programmes of activity. Each of them achieves a combination of the following objectives:

- Enable children and young people to co-create with professional artists, treating young people as artists in their own right
- Inspire people to make positive behavioural change through dynamic youth-led theatre productions, short films, creative digital assets and workshops
- Learn through working with multi-sector organisations, schools, individuals, and artists who share our values
- Co-construct drama and theatre-based approaches which enrich the provision within formal education settings, including training teachers and improve the personal, social, and educational outcomes of pupils
- Make dynamic, engaging, and relevant contemporary theatre for young audiences, especially those who are under-served

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2022*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

- Programme exciting theatre by other companies and artists – prioritise bringing this to under-served settings
- Raise the profile of artistic work produced by young people
- Improve mental health and wellbeing of beneficiaries, and embed this at all stages of projects
- Embody and champion inclusive approaches to co-creation, collaboration and creativity including providing a broad range of activities, working in person and digitally designed to accommodate a range of access needs (e.g. special educational needs, logistical, age-specific, low cost)
- Reduce barriers to taking part by using in person and digital engagement and producing our work in a range of settings, community buildings, schools, outdoor spaces, and professional theatre venues - prioritising areas of socio-economic disadvantage or rural isolation
- Create new pathways into participatory arts careers including work experience, internships, training, mentoring and employment
- Run practical skills training for multi-sector businesses supporting them to learn how to connect better interpersonally in the workplace, with clients and as leaders
- Provide opportunities for participants to work with a diverse range of dynamic professional artists and companies and other specialist practitioners
- Signpost young people to other available arts activities through our networks
- Provide training, mentoring and employment for young and/or early career participatory artists and practitioners, especially those working with young people

**OUR ACTIVITY PROGRAMMES**

**PROGRAMME 1: YOUTH THEATRE (objectives achieved are: a,b,e,g,h,i,j,m,n)**

**Youth Theatre**

A term-time programme of activities with 5 groups in West and South East Northumberland and online, providing a fun, safe and active environment where young people aged 7-19 explore their own lives and their wider world through drama and theatre. In these sessions, young people co-create dynamic, thought-provoking, original theatre alongside professional theatre artists - with the young people's ideas, emotions and experiences at the heart.

The 5 groups are –

- Tynedale, West Northumberland: Stage 2 (school years 3-6); Stage 3/4 (school years 7-11)  
*In 2022-23, we will pilot a new Youth Theatre group in residence at Highfield Middle School in Prudhoe, west Northumberland.*
- Ashington, South East Northumberland: Stage 2 (school years 3-6); Stage 3/4 (school years 7-11)
- Online: drawing young people from across the North East region (school years 5-11)

**Ensemble Young Company**

This 5-month annual project (school years 10-13 and up to age 19) supports teenagers to co-create and tour original theatre in a process closely aligned with professional theatre production.

In 2021-22 we piloted a new model for this group, collaborating with a company of 14 young people drawn from our two main operational locations. This model will continue in 2022-23, with the reintroduction of out-of-region touring following the interruption by the pandemic.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2022*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**PROGRAMME 2: FUTURE READY (a,b,c,d,h,l,j,m,n)**

**Young Cultural Leaders**

Supporting young people in their broader personal development through social action projects, event management, Peer Facilitation training, volunteering and work experience. This includes opportunities to do higher level Arts Award qualifications.

**Creative Interventions**

Working with Education settings to use participation in creative activities to support young people to develop confidence, creative and social skills. Young people are referred into the groups by the host partner, using criteria like high levels of school absence, mental health or behavioural challenges or inter-sectional needs.

The structure is 12 weekly 2-hour sessions with an informal sharing at the end and young people completing an Arts Award qualification.

This is in action-research stage and in 2022-23, we will integrate an evaluation toolkit based on the PERMA Framework, pilot teacher CPD and trial this work for home educated young people.

**Cross-sector Partnerships**

Working with youth sector partners, we are testing co-delivery models combining creative practices with traditional youth work practice. The focus is on using a creative approach to develop employability, social action and leadership skills.

**PROGRAMME 3: Professional Theatre for young audiences (b,c,e,h,j)**

We work with professional theatre artists (writers, directors, actors, designers and production staff) to create social-change theatre that is relevant to the lives of our core beneficiaries.

**Melva**

A theatre production originally produced for public performance in 2017. In 2019, we developed it into a live creative intervention package for children aged 7-11 in schools, in partnership with Children North East. The package supports children's, teachers' and parents' mental health education and strategies for self-management of worries and anxiety.

In 2021-22, we collaborated with Meerkat Films and Vida Creative to create *Melva Digital* – a two strand version of the original intervention programme, consisting of:

- Digital captured version of the original stage play – in three episodes
- Online storytelling game

This had a national launch to schools and family audiences in Autumn 2021.

In 2022-23, we aim to establish commissioning partner relationships with mental health organisations to support the further development and distribution of the programme.

We will also be piloting a hybrid model of delivery – with our creative practitioners using the digital creative assets as an intervention in schools.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2022*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**PROGRAMME 4: CONNECT (b,h,l)**

This is our business training programme for multi-sector organisations, which generates earned income to subsidise our delivery with young people. The CONNECT training approach combines practice from actor training and theatre rehearsals with business thought leadership and social science content and research.

The CONNECT programme is a hybrid model of in person and online deliver and is a fast-growing strand of our work and income stream.

**PROGRAMME 5: Sector Development (c,d,f,g,l,j,k,n,o)**

**Co-Creation Exchange**

We lead a national network of committed cross-sector partners who each support the core aim of finding new ways of developing and advocating for high-quality drama-based approaches to working with young people in the North of England and beyond.

Through the network we use partnerships, skills and knowledge exchange and participatory activities to create high-quality and socially relevant theatre-focused opportunities for young people who face barriers to engagement. This includes touring our work to partner settings and hosting visits from them in ours.

**Creative Catalyst**

This strand of our work focuses on allyship for marginalised communities / groups and creative sector change through listening & learning pathways and career progression in the creative industries.

**Artist Development**

We are a sector leader in the North East in supporting professional theatre artists to develop their practice with, by and for children and young people. We do this by providing training, mentoring and employment opportunities for theatre artists, with a particular emphasis on those who are early career stage.

In 2021-22, we created 4 x permanent employed roles (3.6 FTE) for participatory artists in our core team, providing a new structure through which to support and train early career artists wishing to specialise in this area of work.

In 2022-23, we will further enhance how we train employed artists alongside those working in sessional delivery roles on the team.

**PUBLIC BENEFIT**

The Trustees understand and have discussed the implications of the provisions of the Charities Act 2006, which state that all charities must demonstrate that they are established for public benefit, and have had due regard to the public benefit guidance issued by the Charity Commission. The Trustees believe that the charity meets both of the key principles.

Principle 1 - There must be an identifiable benefit, or benefits

Principle 2 - Benefit must be to the public, or a section of the public

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2022*

**Public Benefit (Cont.)**

The charity's principal public benefits are:

**1. Education and development of young people**

The charity's participatory arts activities focus on strengthening the social and emotional capabilities and mental health of young people – such things as confidence, resilience, creativity, communication, managing feelings, problem-solving, relationship-building, responsibility and perseverance, through participation in performance-based activities.

**2. Education and development of adults**

The charity delivers professional development skills workshops with adults that utilise similar approaches to those used with young people, but made bespoke for the particular setting -e.g. masterclasses in creative leadership and managing imposter syndrome.

**3. Events and plays for the general public**

The charity runs c. 20-30 events and plays per year with its various groups, which are delivered to a high standard and directed by paid professional staff. Those in partner settings are primarily for the young people, families, and staff associated with the setting. They also use community venues and / or in regional theatre venues for performances and events such as Gosforth Civic Theatre and YMCA Northumberland.

There is a safeguarding policy in place, which includes online working, and is reviewed at least annually. There is a lead trustee for safeguarding and they, together with staff members as Designated Safeguarding Officer and a deputy, are all trained with a Level 3 Safeguarding accreditation, refreshed annually.

All staff are required to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure, which are checked annually. Trustees will also have a DBS disclosure should they have direct contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

The main beneficiaries are:

- Children and young people aged 7-19 in North East England who attend our activities e.g. our Youth Theatre and Young Leaders groups. This includes both in-person and digital participation.
- Children and young people aged 7-19 in North East England who we work with in partnerships with other settings; arts, education or community organisations like in our Co-Creation Exchange and schools and our Melva programme. This includes national and international participants.
- Adults who participate in our work; artists and practitioners from other settings e.g. Youth Workers.
- Adults who participate in our professional development training – including national and international participants. This includes both in-person and digital participation.
- Members of the public who attend our performances and events. This includes both in-person and digital participation.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2022*

**Public Benefit (Cont.)**

We prioritise working with beneficiaries in locations of socio-economic disadvantage and rural isolation and which are under-served by cultural provision. In 2021, we established a new primary base in YMCA Northumberland in Ashington in South East Northumberland, a location which fits this description. From this base, we operate a satellite model of delivery including a secondary base in Prudhoe in west Northumberland and a growing number of residential partnerships with cross-sector partners.

**Risk Management**

The Trustees regularly review the major governance, operational and financial risks which the charity faces as part of its annual business planning process and confirm that systems have been established to mitigate these risks.

The charity has a comprehensive risk management framework. It comprises:

- an annual review of the strategic risks the charity may face via the business plan
- the establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

The Trustees are satisfied that appropriate financial systems and controls and employment policies and practices are in place. They consider the key risks facing the charity at this time to be:

- **Financial capacity to sustain recent growth** – The charity has grown considerably in the last two years, establishing a staff team to support the current operations and future ambitions. The increase in staff team, while adding to capacity, has increased the charity's liabilities. The charity is also operating across two administrative bases, which is a strong model for reaching beneficiaries but comes with greater costs.

Following the Covid-19 pandemic interrupting all income streams, the charity worked to establish new ones. These have been slower to generate the target return than first anticipated, though ambitions and confidence in them remain high.

The Trustees also recognise that competition for grant income has increased, and will remain high, with the ongoing effect of the pandemic and likely recession.

An Income Generation Strategy has been agreed with Trustees and free reserves have been increased for the charity to manage increased liabilities. Draft budgets for the next three years have been discussed and agreed by Trustees.

- **Personnel Capacity** – Demand for the charity's services has increased following the pandemic. The core staff team has been expanded with new roles in key areas; income generation, business management and delivery. Further recruitment is scheduled for autumn 2022, funds permitting.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2022*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

**Overview**

Against the backdrop of a persistent pandemic and upsetting world events, Mortal Fools, like so many other charities, has been working hard to make a positive difference to our communities and the children, young people and families we work with.

To be able to navigate the challenges and maintain high quality services for our beneficiaries, has required the team to be agile, responsive, flexible and tenacious.

The result has been a year of further innovation, a continuation of the growth in the previous account period and the return to true hybrid operations as we successfully recommenced live performances in Spring 2022.

In Autumn 2021, we made an exciting expansion into Ashington, relocating our main base of operations into YMCA Northumberland, supporting the growth of our services within a new under-served community and providing the administrative facilities required for our growing team.

In a strategic partnership with YMCA Northumberland, we have devised an operating model of a Creative Youth Hub, with multiple providers for young people operating under one roof. We successfully pitched this idea to Ashington Town Board and the local authority, and it will form a central project in a portfolio bid to Levelling Up Fund Round 2 later in 2022. If this is successful, it will result in a purpose-built, high-spec facility as part of wider town centre regeneration.

Alongside these developments, we have cultivated new relationships with strategic funders, including Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Kavli Trust and Children in Need. Their multi-year funding commitment will support further growth and development of the charity.

In 2022, we will celebrate the charity's 10<sup>th</sup> birthday. While we have certainly grown considerably in size, scope and reach since our inception, there are many of our original values which remain in our DNA – a commitment to working with young people as artists, prioritising those in under-served locations and circumstances and providing opportunities to collaborate with professional artists to make theatre which is relevant to their lives and of such quality that it delights, entertains, and challenges audiences.

In summary, the charity:

- Delivered 343 sessions for young people
- Worked regularly with a core of 61 young people
- Ran 8 regular groups across Northumberland and online
- Created 36 short films and animations, including collaborations with FlyGirl Films, Meerkat Films and Von Fox productions
- Worked with 34 freelance artists and small creative companies
- Launched *Melva Digital Programme* supporting children's mental health, to a national schools audience, securing sales to 27 schools and engaging 91 schools in digital showcase events
- Delivered 69 CONNECT business training sessions and 8 open public online workshops, engaging a total of 1,566 participants from 126 regional, national and international organisations

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2022*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

- Produced 4 live performances for 310 people and a performance for 1000+ people at Northumberland Pride Festival.
- Had 2,900 views and 195 hours watched on our YouTube channel.
- Shared our first live streamed performance to 393 viewers.
- Had 250 new listeners to our audio theatre experience on Spotify (bringing total to over 2,100 since August 2020).
- Established a new primary base in YMCA Northumberland in Ashington, moving into a satellite operating model.

The main creative projects were:

- Youth Theatre – **Let Us Tell You** – April-May 2021 – The two short films, *My Monster Arrived* and *Thank you for Listening*, co-created by our west Northumberland groups and captured by FlyGirl films were shared through a series of watch parties and online screenings.
- Ensemble Young Company – **My People** – the production considered the theme of friendships and was originally co-created for live performance in Spring 2021. Following further interruption by the pandemic, it was reimaged into a series of short films, captured on location by Meerkat Films in October 2021.
- Youth Theatre – **When This is Over** – Summer 2021- Spring 2022. We were a partner amongst 15 Youth Theatre organisations nationally working on this project conceived by Company 3. Using a blueprint script, the groups considered what they wanted from their futures and how those around them could help achieve that. This was the first live production following the start of the pandemic, with two performances to sold out audiences at Gosforth Civic Theatre in January 2022, and live streamed to an online audience.
- Ensemble Young Company – **Flux** – Spring 2022. This was a pilot of the new model for EYC, working with a company of 14 young people aged 14-20 from our two operational bases. They considered the theme of personal identity and co-created the production with a team of professional artists. Flux was performed to sold out audiences at YMCA Northumberland and Gosforth Civic Theatre, and was filmed by Von Fox Productions.
- Professional Theatre – **Melva Digital Programme** – in Autumn 2021, this was launched to a national audience at an event at Gosforth Civic Theatre.

**OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

- Partnered with Youth Focus North East, alongside 12 other regional youth organisations, to employ a young person as a Peer Researcher for 14 months as part of the North East Peer Action Collective. This is part of a National Peer Research and Social Action Project, focusing on reducing serious youth violence.
- Trained two of our Young Leaders group to work as Peer Facilitators, working alongside the employed team to plan and lead activities and devising and presenting a series of short information films – called *Sparked* – explaining how co-creation works.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2022*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

**ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- Commissioned specialist training by Little Cog (disability awareness), Curious Arts (LGBTQIA+ awareness), Company Three (devising with teenagers), Talawa (unconscious bias) and Ubiquitous Arts (mental health first aid and safeguarding).
- Awarded North of Tyne Combined Authority Good Work Pledge – Advanced Level in recognition of our commitment to looking after our people and social responsibility. We were the first small business to achieve this award.
- Joined North East Initiative on Business Ethics (NIBE).
- Collaborated with 8 Northumberland cultural organisations on an audience behaviour research project.
- Recruited three new Trustees and completed a skills audit of the board to inform further governance development needs.
- Presented our work at key conferences and events, including Culture Bridge Annual Conference 2021 and Artworks Alliance national Gathering.

**PARTNERSHIPS**

**Local Authority & Strategic:**

- Northumberland County Council - working with the local authority and other county cultural organisations to deliver Cultural Strategy. We have an SLA to develop drama and theatre for young people.
- YMCA Northumberland, Northumberland County Council, Advance Northumberland, Ashington Town Board on a bid to Levelling Up Fund Round 2.
- Northumberland Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP) - Our CEO is the Chair of Northumberland LCEP group, an initiative established by Culture Bridge North East to deliver the Arts Council's Cultural Education Challenge at a sub-regional level. Led a successful submission for Arts Council Partnership Investment funding, with match from Public Health Northumberland.
- Prudhoe Town Council – local funding support and advocacy.

**Voluntary Sector and Community-Based:**

- Children North East
- Youth Focus North East, and 12 national partners
- Prudhoe Youth Project
- YMCA Northumberland
- NE Youth
- Birkheads Wild

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2022*

**PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS**

Mortal Fools has made a significant step-change in the last year or so, and plans to continue on this trajectory. There are some key development milestones coming up in the next year, including a focus on:

**Improving access to cultural provision through place-based working** – in the next year we will build on the steps already taken to transform our operations into a satellite model of a main base, secondary base and residencies with cross-sector partners.

Much of our energies will be focused on Ashington, an area historically under-served with cultural provision and will include:

- Delivery partnerships with youth organisations, especially YMCA Northumberland and NE Youth
- Capital development, to achieve a new premises, as part of wider strategic town centre regeneration, including work with the local authority on a bid to Levelling Up fund Round 2
- Audience development, building relationships with local groups, businesses and the wider community to raise awareness of our work and deepen understanding of local needs
- Programming for public audiences, with a focus on children, young people, family and school audiences to test appetite for this work in Ashington and potential to support town centre regeneration through attracting visitor footfall
- If we are successful in our application to become an Arts Council National Portfolio organisation, the funding from April 2023 will support the next stages of this work.

**Improving quality by integrating mental health outcomes across the work** – We are developing a comprehensive toolkit and accompanying training package using the PERMA Framework for mental wellbeing. The aim is for this to be a structured approach to integrating and demonstrating impact on mental wellbeing, suitable for a range of settings. This will be trialled in youth and education settings.

**Exploring potential for work with strategic commissioners for *Melva Digital*** – following the national launch of this programme for schools, sales have been slower than hoped. Together with amendments to the programme in response to feedback from schools, we will explore potential for distributing the programme via strategic commissioners – focusing on health and education – as a new approach to achieving this project's income targets.

**Balancing hyper-local community impact and national audience reach**

Building on the successful re-establishment of live performances last year, we will resume touring between partners within our co-creation exchange network.

We will continue to build residential partnerships with schools, including commencing and evaluating a new creative intervention model in schools, using cultural participation to address key needs e.g. absenteeism or mental health challenges. We will also pilot activities for children and young people who are educated at home.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2022*

**PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS (cont)**

**Continuing to cultivate multi-income streams**

This will involve working to build the new income streams created in the last two years:

- CONNECT, our new earned income stream, providing skills workshops for businesses of all sectors, which is already earning more than its pre-pandemic equivalent and demonstrating high growth potential
- Selling Melva Digital Programme, primarily to schools, but with a change of strategy to focus on sales to larger-scale commissioning bodies e.g. health agencies.
- Continuing to prioritise applying for multi-year grant funding. The charity will apply for National Portfolio funding from Arts Council England, which would be a substantial contribution to core costs – 3 years commencing April 2023, if successful.  
Beginning to seek out commissions

**Increase staffing capacity**

We have grown our staff team considerably over the last two years, creating a multi-skilled and highly effective staffing model. We will continue to build this by working to fill key capacity gaps, namely:

- Producer/s – to project manage our growing portfolio of activity projects and partner relationships and to support with income generation
- Marketing – to support with generating sales for key income generating projects.

**Governance development**

As the charity is continuing to grow, including applying to become an Arts Council of England National Portfolio organisation (NPO) in 2023, governance development remains high on the agenda in the coming year.

We will build resilience and diversity of our Board by recruiting 3-6 trustees with broader and more diverse lived experiences, for example young people, LGBTQIA+ people, Black, Asian and global majority people, disabled people and people who have experienced poverty.

We will work in partnership with Curious Arts to design and pilot a training programme for young trustees (16-25) to join the Boards of cultural organisations.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the year ended 31 March 2022*

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES**

The Trustees (who are also the Directors of Mortal Fools for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

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

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

Signed on behalf of the Trustees



**Richard Wise**  
**Trustee**  
**22 November 2022**

# **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS ON THE UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS OF MORTAL FOOLS LIMITED YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

I hereby report to the Trustees of Mortal Fools (Charity Registration Number 1153400) on my examination of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 set out on pages 21 to 36.

## **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity's trustees (and also its directors for the purposes of company law), you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

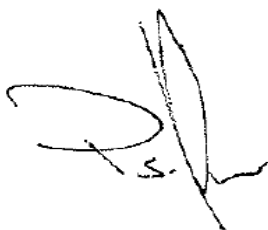
## **Independent Examiner's Statement**

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000, your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountant in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods or principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102)).

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.



**Pete O'Hara, FCA, Chartered Accountant**  
**Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales**  
4 Stoneyhurst Road West, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1PG

22 November 2022

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
<b>Income</b>					
Income from Investments	3	85	-	85	400
Income from Charitable Activities	4	191,715	418,383	610,098	474,457
Income from Donations & Legacies	5	10,426	-	10,426	11,033
		<b>202,226</b>	<b>418,383</b>	<b>620,609</b>	<b>485,890</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Expenditure on Charitable Activities	6	163,482	218,959	382,441	405,146
		<b>163,482</b>	<b>218,959</b>	<b>382,411</b>	<b>405,146</b>
<b>Net Income/(Expenditure)</b>		<b>38,744</b>	<b>199,424</b>	<b>238,168</b>	<b>80,744</b>
Balance brought forward		83,840	125,175	209,015	128,271
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>£122,584</b>	<b>£324,599</b>	<b>£447,183</b>	<b>£209,015</b>

The notes on pages 23 to 36 form part of the financial statements.

All of the activities of the company are classed as continuing.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION/BALANCE SHEET**  
**AS AT 31 MARCH 2022**

	Notes	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2021 £
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Tangible Fixed Assets	9	18,908	3,026
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Debtors	10	218,786	27,154
Cash At Bank & In Hand		259,779	216,303
		<u>478,565</u>	<u>243,457</u>
<b>Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year</b>	11	(50,290)	(37,468)
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)		<u>428,275</u>	<u>205,989</u>
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	12	<u><b>£447,183</b></u>	<u><b>£209,015</b></u>
<b>Represented by:</b>			
Unrestricted Reserves	13	122,584	83,840
Restricted Reserves	13	324,599	125,175
		<u><b>£447,183</b></u>	<u><b>£209,015</b></u>

The notes on pages 23 to 36 form part of the financial statements.

The Trustees are satisfied that for the year ended 31 March 2022 the charity was entitled to exemption under section 477(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees also confirm that the Members have not required the charity to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

(i) ensuring that the charity keeps adequate accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act, and

(ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charity.

**These financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 22 November 2022 and signed on their behalf:**



**Richard Wise**  
**Trustee**  
**Company Registration Number 08102487**

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

**1. Accounting Policies**

**Basis of Preparation**

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable United Kingdom accounting standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 – 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland' ('FRS 102'), and with the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, modified to include certain financial instruments at fair value.

Advantage has been taken of the provisions in the SORP for Charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a statement of cashflows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity.

**Income**

All income is included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income, any performance related conditions attached have been met or are fully within the control of the charity, the income is considered probable and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Donations and legacy income is received by way of donations, legacies, grants and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Where legacies have been notified to the charity but the criteria for income recognition have not been met, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.
- Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.
- Investment income is included when receivable.
- Income from charitable trading activity is accounted for when earned.
- Other income is accounted for when receivable.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

**1. Accounting Policies (Continued)**

**Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:

- Costs of raising funds comprise the costs associated with attracting donations, grants and legacies and the costs of trading for fundraising purposes.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
- Other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

**Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation**

Depreciation is provided on any fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the assets over their remaining useful lives as follows:

- IT Equipment - 33% per annum straight line
- Office Equipment – 25% per annum straight line

A full year's depreciation charge is applied in the year of acquisition and no charge is made in the year of disposal.

**Impairment of Fixed Assets**

A review for indicators of impairment is carried out at each reporting date, with the recoverable amount being estimated where such indicators exist. Where the carrying value exceeds the recoverable amount, the asset is impaired accordingly. Prior impairments are also reviewed for possible reversal at each reporting date.

**Financial Instruments**

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the charity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs.

Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted.

Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost where there is a material adjustment.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

**1. Accounting Policies (Continued)**

**Fund Accounting**

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the purposes of the charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for specific purposes.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

**Taxation Status**

Mortal Fools is a Charity registered under the 1960 Charities Act and is accorded exemption from liability to taxation on its income under S505 Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988.

**Going Concern**

There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

**Judgements and Key Sources of Estimation Uncertainty**

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

There are no significant judgements or estimation uncertainty included within the financial statements.

**2. Legal Status**

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.

**3. Income from Investments**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Interest on cash deposits	85	-	85	400
	<b>£85</b>	<b>£-</b>	<b>£85</b>	<b>£400</b>

The 2021 total of £400 relates wholly to Unrestricted Funds.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

**4. Income from Charitable Activities**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Grant Income</b>				
Arnold Clark Community Fund	-	1,000	1,000	-
Arts Council England	113,995	83,000	196,995	190,000
Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust	-	-	-	500
Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland (CFTWN)	-	-	-	5,000
Culture Bridge North East	-	40,498	40,498	-
DCMS Youth Investment Fund via BBC Children In Need	-	20,114	20,114	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	25,000	-	25,000	30,000
NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group	-	-	-	30,000
Northumberland Children's Trust	-	-	-	20,000
Northumberland County Council	-	9,633	9,633	63,396
Northumberland Public Health: Creative Northumberland	-	9,999	9,999	-
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	-	210,000	210,000	20,000
People's Powerhouse	-	-	-	500
Prudhoe Town Council	-	2,000	2,000	2,210
Rothley Trust	-	1,000	1,000	1,000
Sir James Knott Trust	-	-	-	5,000
Sylvia Waddilove Foundation UK	-	-	-	1,000
The 1989 Willan Charitable Trust at the CFTWN	-	-	-	8,000
The Curtin PARP Fund at the CFTWN	-	15,000	15,000	-
The High Sheriff of Northumberland Youth Against Crime Award Scheme at the CFTWN	-	1,000	1,000	1,000
The John D Endowment Fund at the CFTWN	-	-	-	1,985
The Joicey Trust	-	3,400	3,400	3,000
The Lady Betty Martin Fund within the North East Fund for the Arts at the CFTWN	-	1,500	1,500	-
The North East Fund For The Arts at the CFTWN	-	1,000	1,000	-
The Northern Powergrid Fund at the CFTWN	-	5,750	5,750	3,930

Continued overleaf...

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

**4. Income from Charitable Activities (Cont.)**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Grant Income (Cont.)</b>				
The Pen & Palette Club Fund within the North East Fund for the Arts at the CFTWN	-	-	-	1,000
The Prime Fund at the CFTWN	-	5,000	5,000	-
The Roland Cookson Community Fund at the CFTWN	-	-	-	6,000
The UK Youth Fund	-	-	-	13,385
The Wellesley Trust Fund at the CFTWN	-	-	-	10,000
Virgin Money Foundation	-	500	500	500
	<b>138,995</b>	<b>410,394</b>	<b>549,389</b>	<b>417,406</b>
<b>Earned Income</b>				
Box Office Takings	628	-	628	994
Drama Session Fees	980	-	980	5,011
Partner Contributions	-	7,989	7,989	7,650
Refreshment & Other Sundry Sales	116	-	116	-
Service/Producer Fees	15,890	-	15,890	14,405
Training Fees	35,106	-	35,106	28,991
	<b>52,720</b>	<b>7,989</b>	<b>60,709</b>	<b>57,051</b>
	<b>£191,715</b>	<b>£418,383</b>	<b>£610,098</b>	<b>£474,457</b>

Of the 2021 total of £474,457, £70,051 relates to Unrestricted Funds and £404,406 to Restricted Funds.

**5. Income from Donations & Legacies**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 £	2021 £
Donations & Gift Aid	7,468	-	7,468	5,756
Theatre Tax Relief	2,958	-	2,958	5,277
	<b>£10,426</b>	<b>£-</b>	<b>£10,426</b>	<b>£11,033</b>

The 2021 total of £11,033 relates wholly to Unrestricted Funds.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

**6. Total Expenditure on Charitable Activities**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Production &amp; Activity Costs</b>				
Salaries & On Costs	89,816	153,399	243,215	47,445
Freelance Project Worker Fees	20,752	24,612	45,364	182,962
Venue Hire & Staging Costs	6,785	14,669	21,454	51,193
Design, Print & Promotional Materials	17,268	2,048	19,316	5,857
<b>Support Costs</b>				
Central Staffing Costs - Freelance Team	2,600	4,300	6,900	82,592
Administrative Costs	15,654	8,796	24,450	17,426
Consultancy Fees	5,342	-	5,342	-
Staff Training	2,319	1,340	3,659	12,543
Depreciation	479	9,350	9,829	2,004
<b>Governance Costs</b>				
Accountancy Fees	1,800	240	2,040	1,320
Board Costs	355	205	560	36
Legal & Professional	312	-	312	1,768
	<b>£163,482</b>	<b>£218,959</b>	<b>£382,441</b>	<b>£405,146</b>

Of the 2021 total of £405,146, £38,745 relates to Unrestricted Funds and £366,401 to Restricted Funds.

**7. Net Movement in Funds**

	2022 £	2021 £
The net movement in Funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Depreciation of Owned Fixed Assets	9,829	2,004
Independent Examiner's Fees – Independent Examination	900	900
Independent Examiner's Fees – Other Services	1,140	420

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

**8. Staff Costs & Directors' Remuneration**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Gross Salary Costs	224,172	46,128
Employer's National Insurance	13,238	-
Employer's Pension Contributions	5,805	1,317
	<b>£243,215</b>	<b>£47,445</b>

No employee received remuneration of more than £60,000 during the year (2021: Nil).

The average number of staff employed during the year, calculated as full-time equivalents, was as follows:

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>No.</b>	<b>No.</b>
Artistic Production and Support	11	6

No remuneration was paid to any Trustees in the year.

No travel and subsistence expenses were reimbursed to Trustees in respect of their attendance at meetings of the charity (2021: £Nil).

**9. Tangible Fixed Assets**

	<b>IT &amp; Office Equipment</b>	<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Cost</b>		
At 1 April 2021	6,088	6,088
Additions in year	25,711	25,711
At 31 March 2022	<b>31,799</b>	<b>31,799</b>
<b>Accumulated Depreciation</b>		
At 1 April 2021	3,062	3,062
Charge for year	9,829	9,829
At 31 March 2022	<b>12,891</b>	<b>12,891</b>
<b>Net Book Value</b>		
At 31 March 2022	<b>£18,908</b>	<b>£18,908</b>
At 1 April 2021	<b>£3,026</b>	<b>£3,026</b>

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

**10. Debtors**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Trade Debtors	-	925
Other Taxes & Social Security Costs	-	3,960
Accrued Income	214,711	20,633
Prepayments	4,075	1,636
	<b>£218,786</b>	<b>£27,154</b>

All sums are due within 1 year.

**11. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Trade Creditors	23,316	10,038
Other Taxes & Social Security Costs	6,370	-
Other Creditors - Pension Contributions Due	1,176	2,635
Other Creditors - Net Salaries Due	18,108	10,597
Accruals	1,320	14,198
	<b>£50,290</b>	<b>£37,468</b>

**12. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Fixed Assets	1,033	17,875	18,908	3,026
Debtors	8,252	210,534	218,786	27,154
Cash at Bank and In Hand	142,222	117,557	259,779	216,303
Creditors – Due Within 1 Year	(28,923)	(21,367)	(50,290)	(37,468)
	<b>£122,584</b>	<b>£324,599</b>	<b>£447,183</b>	<b>£209,015</b>

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

**13. Analysis of Charitable Funds**

	Fund at 1 April 2021 £	Income in Year £	Expenditure in Year £	Fund at 31 March 2022 £
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>				
Charity General Fund	83,840	202,226	(163,482)	122,584
<b>Restricted Funds</b>				
Arts Council England National Lottery Project Grants (ACE PG): Co- Creation Exchange	-	68,000	(17,554)	50,446
ACE PG: Future Ready 2020 Development	13,350	-	(1,151)	12,199
ACE PG: When This Is Over	-	15,000	(14,262)	738
ACE PG: Young People's Theatre Exchange 2019-21	25,236	-	(21,772)	3,464
Arnold Clark Community Fund	-	1,000	(1,000)	-
Culture Bridge North East (CBNE) via CFTWN	-	1,500	-	1,500
CBNE: Capacity Building	-	6,000	-	6,000
CBNE: Partnership Investment (PI)	-	32,998	-	32,998
DCMS Youth Investment Fund via BBC Children In Need	-	20,114	(6,882)	13,232
Garfield Weston Foundation	22,170	-	(21,735)	435
Northumberland Children's Trust	10,000	-	(10,000)	-
Northumberland County Council (N'land CC): Arts and Heritage SLA	10,797	-	(10,347)	450
N'land CC: Community Chest Scheme	2,550	4,633	(2,550)	4,633
N'land CC: Match Funding to support Creative Northumberland	-	5,000	-	5,000
N'land CC: Matching Funding to support Young People's Theatre Exchange	2,500	-	(2,500)	-

Continued overleaf...

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

**13. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)**

	Fund at 1 April 2021 £	Income in Year £	Expenditure in Year £	Fund at 31 March 2022 £
Northumberland Public Health: Creative Northumberland	-	9,999	-	9,999
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	-	210,000	(69,898)	140,102
Prudhoe Town Council Grant Aid October 2020	1,460	-	(1,460)	-
Prudhoe Town Council Grant Aid April 2021	-	2,000	(2,000)	-
Rothley Trust	556	1,000	(666)	890
Sir James Knott Trust	5,000	-	(5,000)	-
The #iWill Social Action Fund at the CFTWN	4,220	-	(4,220)	-
The 1989 Willan Charitable Trust at the CFTWN	8,000	-	(3,960)	4,040
The Curtin PARP Fund at the CFTWN	-	15,000	(1,000)	14,000
The High Sheriff of Northumberland Youth Against Crime Scheme at the CFTWN	1,000	1,000	(1,000)	1,000
The Joicey Trust	3,000	3,400	(3,000)	3,400
The Lady Betty Martin Fund within the North East Fund for the Arts at the CFTWN	-	1,500	(1,500)	-
The North East Fund For The Arts at the CFTWN	-	1,000	(500)	500
The Northern Powergrid Fund at the CFTWN	-	5,750	(800)	4,950
The Prime Fund at the CFTWN	-	5,000	(302)	4,698
The Roland Cookson Community Fund at the CFTWN	3,801	-	(3,801)	-

Continued overleaf...

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

**13. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)**

	Fund at 1 April 2021 £	Income in Year £	Expenditure in Year £	Fund at 31 March 2022 £
The Wellesley Trust Fund at the CFTWN	11,535	-	(3,571)	7,964
Virgin Money Foundation	-	500	(500)	-
YMCA Northumberland	-	350	(350)	-
Youth Focus North East Partner Contribution (via Youth Endowment Fund, #iwill and Co-op Grant)	-	7,639	(5,678)	1,961
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>125,175</b>	<b>418,383</b>	<b>(218,959)</b>	<b>324,599</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>£209,015</b>	<b>£620,609</b>	<b>£(382,441)</b>	<b>£447,183</b>



**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

**13. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)**

Name of Restricted Fund	Purpose & Allocation of the Restricted Fund
<b>Project-Specific Funds</b>	
<i>#iWill Social Action Fund / Northern Powergrid / High Sheriff Northumberland Youth Against Crime Scheme (2021)</i>	Towards the cost of our <u>Young Cultural Leaders</u> programme and associated social action events/activities.
<i>Arnold Clark Community Fund / ACE PG When This Is Over / Lady Betty Martin Fund within the North East Fund for the Arts</i>	Towards the cost of <u>When This Is Over</u> , and related outreach/partnership work.
<i>Prudhoe Town Council Grant Aid Oct 2020</i>	Towards core & project costs of Action Research project to engage disadvantaged children in Prudhoe, including Arts Award Day with Prudhoe Youth Project and production of findings report.
<i>Prudhoe Town Council Grant Aid April 2021</i>	Towards costs of delivering activity in Prudhoe from July 2021 - March 2022, including initiating activity with Highfield Middle School and Peer Facilitator training with young people from Prudhoe.
<i>ACE PG Young People's Theatre Exchange / The Joicey Trust (2021) / Northumberland CC Young People's Theatre Exchange Match Funding / Virgin Money Foundation</i>	Towards the cost of <u>My People</u> and related outreach and partnership work within the Young People's Theatre Exchange Network.
<i>North East Fund for the Arts</i>	Towards the cost of delivering outreach workshops and Peer Facilitator training with Gateshead based youth organisations.
<i>Culture Bridge North East via CFTWN</i>	Towards the cost of piloting Mortal Fools as a resident theatre company at Highfield Middle School.
<i>Culture Bridge North East Partnership Funding / Northumberland CC Creative Northumberland Match Funding / Northumberland Public Health</i>	Towards the cost of <i>Creative Northumberland</i> , a collaborative project between schools and cultural organisations testing the impact of cultural activity on wellbeing. Mortal Fools are acting as budget holders for this project on behalf of the <u>Northumberland LCEP</u> .
<i>Culture Bridge North East: Capacity Building</i>	To fund a dedicated Producer for <i>Creative Northumberland</i> .

Continued overleaf...

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

**13. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)**

Name of Restricted Fund	Purpose & Allocation of the Restricted Fund
<i>Curtin PARP fund</i>	Towards the costs of a discreet project with a Youth Sector partner, to support young people experiencing disadvantage to reach their potential through drama, theatre and associated artforms.
<i>Prime Fund</i>	Towards the cost of piloting 2 x new youth theatre groups in Ashington
<i>ACE PG Co-Creation Exchange / The Joicey Trust (2022) / High Sheriff Northumberland Youth Against Crime Scheme (2022)</i>	Towards the cost of the <u>Co-Creation Exchange Network</u> , including the co-creation and production of <u>FLUX</u> and cross-sector development work.
<i>ACE PG Future Ready 2020 Development</i>	Towards the cost of <u>Future Ready</u> . This programme has developed significantly since the original application to Arts Council, due to disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.
<i>Youth Focus North East</i>	Towards the cost of employing a Peer Researcher and participating in the North East <u>Peer Action Collective</u> .

**14. Related Party Transactions**

There were no related party transactions during this year.

**15. Taxation**

The company is a registered charity and no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

**16. Financial Commitments**

No material financial commitments have been made in respect of future financial years.

**17. Company Limited by Guarantee**

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

There are currently 6 members of the company (2021: 6).

**MORTAL FOOLS**

England & Wales - Charity number 1153400

---

# Accounts

---

Company Registration Number 08102487

Registered Charity Number 1153400

# **MORTAL FOOLS**

(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

## **REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**

**For the period ending 31 March 2021**



**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**NOTE FROM THE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES**

The last 18 months has been like no other and has brought the issues that Mortal Fools were set up to tackle to the fore. It is a testament to the team that the organisation has not only continued to operate in this period, but continued to grow, adapting to the environment and in so doing creating great content and, through invention of thought, reach a greater audience who needed our support more than ever.

Mortal Fools uses theatre to highlight the issues that confront young people, creates a safe space where they can be articulated and suggests ways to conquer, grow and ultimately give young people the belief they need to reach their full potential. While in the eye of the storm we reflected on what could be done, decided how, and have continued to adapt as the pandemic continued to change its course. We were very conscious that if we had sheltered from the storm, at such a critical time for the communities we serve, the trust we had worked so hard for would have been lost. To be successful in this approach you need a strong platform, confidence, good governance and trust at every level.

Our approach has matured over the last four years and we have become more resilient through; organisational change, improved contracts of employment, formalised robust recruitment policies, more effective forward planning and a positive approach to risk management. This has made us more confident in what we do and more innovative in how we do it. We felt well prepared when our skills were needed most. We also know we have had some good fortune along the way but there is more than a ring of truth in Louis Pasteur's phrase, "*Fortune favours the prepared mind.*"

We enjoy the pace at which we work, we look forward not back and know that to reach our aims and broaden our scope of influence and reach, we need to continue to grow and each year our belief that we can achieve these outcomes gets stronger.

On behalf of the Board, I commend the team and its leadership and take great pride in our collective achievements which gain ever more industry recognition.



Richard Wise  
Chair of Trustees

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

The Trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the 16 month period ended 31 March 2021.

**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

<b>Registered charity name</b>	Mortal Fools
<b>Charity registration number</b>	1153400
<b>Company registration number</b>	08102487
<b>Registered office</b>	Spetchells Centre, 58 Front Street, Prudhoe, NE42 5AA

**Trustees**

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

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

Mr R Wise (Chair)	
Ms R Pattinson	
Ms A Dixon	
Mrs R A K Barclay	
Miss K Stanforth	Appointed 21 February 2021
Ms S Spencer	Appointed 31 March 2021
Mrs M Russell	Resigned 26 March 2020
Mrs N L Bell	Resigned 21 February 2021
Dr M C Willson	Resigned 31 March 2021

<b>Company Secretary</b>	Ms A Dixon (from 26 March 2020) Mrs M Russell (to 26 March 2020)
--------------------------	---

<b>Bankers</b>	Triodos Bank, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AS
----------------	--

<b>Independent Examiner</b>	Mr P O'Hara FCA, 4 Stoneyhurst Road West, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1PG
-----------------------------	--

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

**Governing Documents**

Mortal Fools is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 12 June 2012, as Northern Arts Enterprises Limited, and registered as a charity on 14 August 2013.

It was established under the Memorandum of Association that established its objects and powers and is governed under its Articles of Association, as amended by special resolutions registered at Companies House on 5 July 2012, 3 September 2012, 8 August 2013, 12 May 2016, 22 February 2018 and 1 December 2020.

The charity changed its name from Northern Arts Enterprises to Mortal Fools on 22 February 2016. The charity used to also trade under the registered name of 'Tyne Valley Youth Theatre', which was de-registered on 16 October 2018. They ceased using this name altogether in July 2019.

The Directors of the company are also Trustees of the charity.

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

**Charitable Purpose**

Mortal Fools charitable objects are for the benefit of the public particularly but not exclusively in the north of England, through the teaching, practice and showcasing of the arts in all their forms:

- (1) To help children and young people develop their skills, capacity and capabilities to enable them to participate fully in society as responsible, mature and fulfilled individuals;
- (2) To advance the mental health education of children, young people, their significant adults and the general public to improve mental wellbeing;
- (3) To promote, support and improve the social inclusion of children and young people who are socially excluded by providing them with opportunities to access activities and develop their skills and experiences in such a way that they are better able to participate more fully in society;

For the purposes of this clause 'socially excluded' means children and young people (up to aged 25) who are excluded from society, or parts of society (like social circles) as a result of one or more of the following factors: socio-economic circumstances; race; gender; poor educational or skills attainment; mental health; disability; bullying and harassment and ethnic origin.

- (4) To maintain, improve, and advance arts education of children and young people, professional artists and the general public.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)**

The charity currently has six Trustees. This year, the charity has continued its governance development with a skills audit and subsequent training of trustees by external providers, with a focus on Safeguarding, Mental Health and Equality and Diversity and Inclusion. As the charity is continuing to grow, including applying to become an Arts Council of England National Portfolio organisation (NPO) in 2022/23, governance development remains high on the agenda in the coming year.

The Board meets a minimum of five times per year and conducts an Annual General Meeting, now expected to be scheduled in September. Since March 2020, meetings moved to digital platforms and increased in frequency to monthly. This allowed the Board to provide better governance and support to staff during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Detailed written reports and an agenda are prepared by Trustees and senior staff and circulated in advance of Board meetings.

The charity is working on board development to increase representation of key stakeholder groups in governance and improve the diversity of trustees. Trustee recruitment is scheduled for late Autumn 2021 and will focus on engaging young people, independent artists, disabled people, LGBTQIA+ people and people who have experienced poverty and those working with young people in other settings e.g. Education, Youth and Health.

The charity is in early stages of developing a new trustee training programme for artists in partnership with Curious Arts and Community Foundation of Tyne & Wear and Northumberland.

**Appointment and Induction of Trustees**

Trustees are elected to the Board based on discussions and recommendations offered by Trustees and external advisors to the organisation. Following an informal discussion with the Chair and / or CEO, there is a two-stage application process of letter and CV followed by an interview with at least two Trustees.

New Trustees are inducted by a Trustee buddy and senior staff, supported by a comprehensive written Trustee Induction Pack including a range of resources to support their understanding of their role and the charity's activities.

**Reserves Policy**

The Trustees have reviewed the charity's needs for reserves in line with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission.

The Trustees aim to hold a level of Unrestricted Reserves which enables the charity to have sufficient financial resources to meet various liabilities which would crystallise if Mortal Fools were unable to continue operating, together with an allowance to enable the charity to respond flexibly to issues or appropriate initiatives which might be identified outside of its annual budgeting process.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)**

**Reserves Policy (Cont.)**

At present, the Trustees estimate that the Unrestricted Reserves required to cover all known liabilities amount to approximately £75,000. The trustees recognise that these liabilities will increase with the addition of new posts in the next year and therefore consider that a further contingency of at least £15,000 is prudent, resulting in a target level of Unrestricted Reserves in the region of £90,000. Mortal Fools currently holds Unrestricted Reserves of £83,840 at 31 March 2021.

The Trustees aim, through their budgeting processes, to reach the target level within two years.

The Trustees believe that, once achieved, the unrestricted reserves should be maintained at least at this level to ensure the charity can run efficiently and meet the needs of the beneficiaries.

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

**Grant-making**

The charity does not currently engage in grant-making activity.

**Contribution of Volunteers**

The charity makes limited use of volunteers within its productions and to support its activities.

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

**Aims & Objectives**

Mortal Fools' purpose is to support people to have better quality inter-personal relationships with one another and to use theatre and drama-based activities as the methodology to achieve this.

We are a company of participatory artists and practitioners who are committed to co-creating compelling, dynamic, socially-relevant and high-quality theatre-based work with children, young people and communities.

We work with 1,000s of children and young people every year, mostly in the North East. We develop our skills, knowledge and approach through dynamic multi-sector partnerships (Youth, Community, Health and Arts and Culture), jointly co-constructing work to meet the contemporary needs of children and young people.

We are champions of theatre produced by young people and for young people, we advocate for this work to be recognised and supported as an important art form in our sector, touring our work nationally, supporting participatory artists to train in co-creation and embedding achieving positive wellbeing outcomes across all our work. We have recently started digital creative work, likely to be a permanent evolution of how we engage with our participants and audiences.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**WHY we do what we do**

We are a purpose-driven organisation. Our work must be relevant to and matter in wider society and make a demonstrable and measurable difference to those we work with.

We recognise that the presence of positive and secure inter-personal relationships is a key factor in personal wellbeing, motivation, civil engagement and life fulfilment. We use drama and theatre-based approaches – inter-personal by nature – to support people to build the skills and knowledge to form and maintain better relationships. This work is positive action against the shift towards the divided, competitive and aggressive societal changes seen in the UK and wider world in recent years.

Through all of our work we advocate for, demonstrate and give people ways to form better relationships and learn how positive connection and shared positive experiences with one another can be used to prevent those things which drive us apart. Positive mental health and wellbeing outcomes are an integral part of our work. We use the ratified PERMA Framework as our approach to planning, monitoring and evaluating the impact of our work on wellbeing outcomes.

Our work helps people to bring about changes in behaviour and outlook, increasing in confidence, experiencing personal accomplishment, building their personal resilience, shaping a more positive self-image and setting themselves up for a more positive future.

We are working to create a society where everyone is motivated, engaged and able to bring their unique abilities to help make the world a little bit better. The problems of the world are essentially the problems of individuals. Through supporting individuals to change, together we may just be able to change the world.

**HOW we work**

We use high-quality drama and the process of making and performing theatre-based work as our primary tools for change. Our work explores contemporary concerns facing children and young people and the realities of the world we're living in right now – inviting positive change.

**We have 4 key values that shape everything we do:**

**1. CONTRIBUTING - *Everyone Matters***

Co-creation is at the centre of everything we do. All of our team and everyone we work with contributes to shaping our programmes and our activities, helping us to learn and make an impact.

Our activities are participatory, with ideas being supported, acted up and recognised from all involved. Our activities are an asset in the lives of the people we work with, making a positive contribution and influence in both grassroots and strategic multi-sector settings.

We remain relevant to wider society, with our work making a positive and important contribution.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**2. GROWING - *Becoming more***

We are bold, ambitious and entrepreneurial. We embrace challenges and are not afraid of failure. We champion a *growth mindset* and constantly look to learn from others. We are committed to continuous reflection and development, supporting everyone with the right level of challenge to become more.

We receive feedback graciously and gratefully and use supportive and constructive ways to give and respond to feedback.

**3. WITH OTHERS - *Better Together***

Our activities bring people together – to achieve, to learn and to have fun – with curiosity, co-creation and kindness at the heart of everything we do. We seek out people to work with who know things that we do not, integrating ongoing input from our beneficiaries, artists and others we work with or whose work relates to our own. We prioritise working with partners who share our values and whose work has similar motivations.

We support the development of key interpersonal skills like empathy, teamwork and resilience for all who work with us. We care for one another, and this compassion helps us to build strong, lasting and fruitful relationships.

**4. AS OURSELVES - *Always authentic***

We create safe spaces which support and encourage everyone to be their authentic, imperfect selves - with individual strengths, vulnerabilities, lived experiences, emotions and needs. We recognise, respect and embrace our differences, understanding that this makes us all stronger, more empathetic and wiser.

We strive to meet the needs of everyone we work with, making sure our company is welcoming and inclusive to people from all walks of life. We create environments that are genuinely supportive and accessible, where everyone feels valued as an individual, and is enabled to contribute.

As a company, we do not copy or try to compete with others. We confidently walk our own path, and we seek to work with those who also value authenticity and openness.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**WHAT we do**

We have several programmes of work. Each of them does some combination of the following:

- Enable children and young people to co-create with professional artists, treating young people as artists in their own right
- Inspire people to make positive behavioural change through dynamic youth-led theatre productions and workshops
- Learn through working with multi-sector organisations, schools, individuals, and artists who share our values
- Co-construct drama and theatre-based approaches which enrich the provision within formal education settings, including training teachers and improve the personal, social, and educational outcomes of pupils
- Make dynamic, engaging, and relevant contemporary theatre for young audiences
- Programme exciting theatre by other companies and artists – prioritise bringing this to settings where there is not much available
- Champion work produced by young people, and campaign for its recognition as an important and high-quality art form
- Improve mental health and wellbeing of beneficiaries, and embed this at all stages of projects
- Embody and champion inclusive approaches to co-creation, collaboration and creativity
- Limiting barriers to taking part by taking our work to audiences in a range of settings, community buildings, schools, outdoor spaces, and professional theatre venues
- Support participatory artists working in youth arts with training, mentoring and employment
- Provide producing support for artists creating work that aligns with our purpose and venues, especially emerging and early career artists
- Create new pathways into participatory arts careers including work experience, internships, training, mentoring and employment
- Run practical skills training for multi-sector businesses supporting them to learn how to connect better interpersonally in the workplace, with clients and as leaders.

**OUR PROGRAMMES**

At the time of writing, we are working to reshape our young people's programmes to:

- a) Prioritise working with children and young people with the least access to arts and culture and who will most benefit from our work
- b) Allow for more cross-over between different parts of our provision
- c) More effectively meet young people's needs
- d) Embed a combination of in-person and digital engagement and artistic outputs into our long-term programmes

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

Our current activity programmes for our CYP beneficiaries and our programme of training workshops for businesses (profits subsidise the programmes for CYP) are:

**PROGRAMME 1: CREATIVES OF THE FUTURE**

Our public theatre programme has a well-established regional profile and reach and a national reach that is being developed.

Through this programme we aim to:

- Provide opportunities for young people aged 7-19 (and up to 25 in our Young People's Theatre Exchange engagement programme) to participate in high-quality arts activities delivered by professional artists where the focus is on the development of broad skills e.g. confidence, resilience, perseverance, creativity, commitment, teamwork and accountability.
- Support young people in their broader personal development through leadership opportunities, volunteering, voluntary work, and work experience, which includes event management, administration, producing and programming theatre, facilitation and fundraising. This includes opportunities to do higher level Arts Award qualifications.
- Produce professional theatre for young audiences who are under-served.
- Make arts activities more geographically accessible for young people in Northumberland and the wider North by providing activities in local, often rural, locations, prioritising areas of socio-economic disadvantage or rural isolation.
- Provide a broad range of activities, designed to accommodate a range of needs (e.g. special educational needs, logistical, age-specific, low cost).
- Provide opportunities for participants to work with a range of dynamic professional artists and companies and other specialist practitioners.
- Signpost young people to other available arts activities through our networks.
- Support young people interested in a career in the arts with work experience, mentoring and training.
- Provide support and training for young and/or early career artists and practitioners, specifically focusing on supporting skills in creative work with young people.

The CREATIVES OF THE FUTURE programme includes:

**Mortal Fools Youth Theatre** – A term-time programme of activities in west Northumberland, providing a fun, safe and active environment where young people aged 7-19 explore their own lives and their wider world through drama and theatre. In these sessions, young people co-create dynamic, thought-provoking, original theatre alongside professional theatre artists - with the young people's ideas, emotions and experiences at the heart.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

Our Youth Theatre currently has 4 groups – Stage 2 (school years 3-6); Stage 3 (school years 7-11); Ensemble (school years 10-13 and up to age 19) and an online group (mixed-age, created in 2021).

In 2022 we will extend the Youth Theatre provision to include Stage 1 for children in school years 1-2 and pilot new Youth Theatre groups in a second location, Ashington, in south east Northumberland.

**Young People's Theatre Exchange**

We lead a network of committed cross-sector partners who each support the core aim of finding new ways of developing and advocating for high-quality drama-based approaches to working with young people in the North of England.

Through the network we use partnerships, skills and knowledge exchange and participatory activities to create high-quality and socially relevant theatre-focused opportunities for young people who face barriers to engagement.

This centres around an original theatre production by our Youth Theatre Ensemble group (aged 14-19) which tours to venues around the north of England and includes a programme of peer-led engagement activity.

In 2022, we will re-launch the Ensemble group to be an ensemble of young people from different groups / settings, enabling participation by a more diverse group of young people.

**Artist Development**

We are a sector leader in the North East in supporting professional theatre artists to develop their practice with, by and for children and young people. We do this by providing training, mentoring and employment opportunities for theatre artists, with a particular emphasis on those who are early career stage.

In 2021, we redesigned our staffing structure to include artists in employed positions, providing greater security and development for them and greater stability for the charity. In 2022, we will recruit two further artists to the employed core team, together with programming work by diverse guest artists.

**Producing Professional Theatre**

We work with professional theatre artists (writers, directors, actors, designers and production staff) to create social-change theatre that is relevant to our core beneficiaries.

Currently the focus of this area of our work is MELVA, a theatre production originally produced for public performance in 2017. In 2019, we developed it into a creative intervention package for children aged 7-11 in schools, in partnership with Children North East. The package supports children's and teachers' mental health education and strategies for management of worries and anxiety.

Over 2800 children took part in the MELVA programme in Autumn 2019 and Spring 2020.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

In response to being unable to tour Melva during the Covid-19 pandemic, in 2020, we partnered with Vida Creative to produce a Melva online storytelling game for schools and families.

In 2021, we worked with Meerkat Films to produce a digital capture version of the original Melva stage play.

The digital stage play and the online game will be launched in Autumn 2021 as a Melva Digital Programme – a new version of the original creative intervention programme for schools.

**PROGRAMME 2: FUTURE READY**

This programme uses the process of making theatre to support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to develop the skills, competencies and confidence to make a successful transition out of education and into adult life.

The theatre productions and other artistic work produced in this programme are co-created by a company of young people, professional artists and school / education staff.

The programme has partnership working at its core – having been developed with Collingwood School and Media Arts College and Northumberland Learning & Skills.

It is also an advocacy programme, to demonstrate how much young people with SEND can achieve, challenge assumptions of those around them and wider society by touring their high-quality theatre productions for public audiences.

In 2021-22, this programme will be redesigned to balance effective cross-over with our other young people's programmes with the need for bespoke, specialist provision. Partnership working will remain a key focus of this work and we have funding in place to support this development.

**PROGRAMME 3: CONNECT TRAINING FOR BUSINESSES**

We deliver training workshops with a range of multi-sector organisations. Our training approach combines practice from actor training and theatre rehearsals with business thought leadership and social science content and research. The income from this work subsidises core costs and our young people's programmes.

We have delivered versions of this training successfully for a number of years, mostly in partnership with Northern Stage in Newcastle.

In 2020, we launched CONNECT, a new programme of training which focused on digital delivery. This has since developed into a hybrid offer of digital and in-person delivery.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**PUBLIC BENEFIT**

The Trustees understand and have discussed the implications of the provisions of the Charities Act 2006, which state that all charities must demonstrate that they are established for public benefit, and have had due regard to the public benefit guidance issued by the Charity Commission. The Trustees believe that the charity meets both of the key principles.

Principle 1 - There must be an identifiable benefit, or benefits

Principle 2 - Benefit must be to the public, or a section of the public

The charity's principal public benefits are:

**1. Education and development of young people**

The charity's participatory arts activities focus on strengthening the social and emotional capabilities and mental health of young people – such things as confidence, resilience, creativity, communication, managing feelings, problem-solving, relationship-building, responsibility and perseverance, through participation in creative activities.

**2. Education and development of adults**

The charity delivers professional development skills workshops with adults that utilise similar approaches to those used with young people, but made bespoke for the particular setting. One example is training people in a range of organisations in Digital Facilitation skills.

**3. Events and plays for the general public**

The charity runs c20-30 events and plays per year with its various groups, which are delivered to a high standard and directed by paid professional staff. Those in partner settings are primarily for the young people, families, and staff associated with the setting. They also use community venues and / or in regional theatre venues for performances and events such as Gosforth Civic Theatre and Northern Stage.

There is a safeguarding policy in place, which includes online working, and is reviewed at least annually. All lead and associate staff are required to have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) disclosure, which are updated annually. Trustees will also have a DBS disclosure should they have direct contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

The main beneficiaries are:

- Children and young people aged 7-19 in North East England who attend our activities e.g. our Youth Theatre and Young Leaders groups. This includes both in-person and digital participation.
- Children and young people aged 7-19 in North East England who we work with in partnerships with other settings, like arts, education or community organisations like in our Young People's Theatre Exchange and schools, like our Melva programme. This includes national and international participants.
- Adults who participate in our work, like artists and practitioners from other settings e.g. Youth Workers.
- Adults who participate in our professional development training – including national and international participants. This includes both in-person and digital participation.
- Members of the public who attend our performances and events. This includes both in-person and digital participation.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**Public Benefit (Cont.)**

We prioritise working with beneficiaries in locations of socio-economic disadvantage, rural isolation and where there is a lack of creative activities readily available. We established an initial base in Prudhoe, in west Northumberland in 2017, an area which fits this description, with the intention of cultivating a meaningful relationship with the local community, and responding with work that meets the hyper-local needs, alongside building a national audience. In the coming year, we are expanding into a new base in Ashington in south-east Northumberland, an area of higher deprivation and no cultural provision.

**Risk Management**

The Trustees regularly review the major governance, operational and financial risks which the charity faces as part of its annual business planning process and confirm that systems have been established to mitigate these risks.

The charity has created a revised risk management framework in response to risks posed by the Covid-19 pandemic and the charity's addition of digital operations and delivery. It comprises:

- an annual review of the strategic risks the charity may face via the business plan
- the establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

The Trustees are satisfied that appropriate financial systems and controls and employment policies and practices are in place. They consider the key risks facing the charity at this time to be:

- **Financial capacity to support growth** – The charity has grown considerably in the last 18 months, doubling turnover. Following the interruption to all income streams by the pandemic, new income sources have been developed to return the charity to a stable footing and make the operations secure in the longer term. These income streams will take time to fully realise, presenting ongoing risk to funding for core costs. Reserves have been increased for the charity to manage increasing liabilities (principally from increasing staff). Draft budgets for the next three years have been discussed and agreed by Trustees.
- **Personnel Capacity** - The charity has grown and is continuing to grow at a considerable (although manageable) rate. Additional staff have been recruited to the core team including key income-generating and delivery roles, releasing capacity for the leadership staff. Further recruitment of new roles to support operations and delivery is scheduled for Autumn 2021.
- **Suitable space for operations** – The board recognises the need for public visibility for the charity to effectively build community relationships. The current administrative premises of the charity is now too small for the core staff team and there is a lack of available space to deliver activities with beneficiaries in and around the main base. The charity will need to find additional administrative and delivery space in the coming year.
- **Continued disruption from Covid-19** – At the time of writing, the pandemic remains. The board are satisfied with the approach to managing the impact on activities to limit disruption. This will need to remain responsive to further changes e.g. further lockdowns.

# **MORTAL FOOLS**

## **(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

### **TRUSTEES' REPORT**

*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

## **ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

### **Overview**

The period covered by this report – December 2019 to March 2021 – has been the most tumultuous, but also the fastest growth and most innovative period in the charity's history.

At the start of the year, we had clear and ambitious plans for the future – new programmes of work, partnerships and theatre productions – all of which were interrupted with little notice in late March 2020.

This started with the cancellation of *Relentless*, our ensemble Youth Theatre production which was 3 days away from starting its northern tour of venues as part of our Young People's Theatre Exchange project. Our immediate response was to focus on the welfare of the young people and staff involved in this project. We quickly organised for their final rehearsal run-through to be filmed by Von Fox Productions and held a celebration of what they had achieved before everyone went into social lockdown.

This focus on people first and foremost has been typical of the charity's responses to the initial and ongoing impact of the pandemic. In late March 2020, we held online gatherings for all staff and associate artists and our young people to revisit the charity's core purpose, and then considered collectively what our work could look like during a pandemic that made it impossible to be in a physical room together.

The early planning and development meetings – and the successful funding applications which followed – gave rise to an extraordinary body of creative work and business development during the next year or so. This involved a total pivot of operations into digital meeting spaces and formats, a move into digital-based artistic creation and subsequently a transition into a hybrid form of working, combining in-person and digital activities. In summary, the charity:

- Supported c80 children and young people to participate in Youth Theatre activities we led in person and via zoom
- Supported a further 600 children to engage in our *Melva Digital Programme* testers
- Delivered almost uninterrupted services of 300 sessions in 46 weeks of the 52 weeks between April 2020 and March 2021
- Engaged digital audiences and participants of our productions totaling c6000 people
- Established new creative partnerships, focusing on digital arts development e.g. with Vida Creative and Meerkat Films
- Provided paid work for over 30 independent artists
- Provided training and mentoring for over 60 independent artists
- Delivered 75 CONNECT business training sessions to 52 regional, national and international organisations, engaging 3,000+ participants in sessions like *Digital Facilitation*, *Managing Difficult Conversations* and *Defining your Why*.
- Created and recruited 3 new employed roles for artists within the core team and 9 for casual workers.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

The main creative projects were:

Pre-pandemic:

- Youth Theatre – *In With the New* – Christmas 2019 multi-group, promenade performances involving c35 children and young people at Fuse Media Centre. Performances explored overcoming fears and not putting off till tomorrow, what you can do today.
- Youth Theatre Ensemble – *Relentless* – the production was devised by a company of 10 young people and two artists, considering the effect of the current education system on teenagers. It was due to start a northern tour of seven venues at the end of March, which was cancelled because of the first lockdown.
- Future Ready – *Hugging Dogs 2* – we were working with a group of 12 pupils at Collingwood School to remount and tour a production of Hugging Dogs. This was halted at first lockdown and we have been unable to resume it because of ongoing restrictions for work in schools.
- Professional Theatre – *MELVA Live* – completed the second leg of our regional schools tour and a 4-day residency at Gosforth Civic Theatre with this creative intervention project, directly engaging with more than 1600 children from 12 schools.

During pandemic:

**YOUTH THEATRE**

***Coronavirus Time Capsule***

This was an international digital participation project, devised and designed by our partner, Company Three, with a weekly devising structure to capture teenagers' responses to the pandemic via short, themed videos, giving them a collective voice and opportunities to share their experiences with one another all round the world.

Two of our Youth Theatre groups took part in Summer 2020 (with an adaptation for our younger group) with the whole project involving over 250 companies and groups globally.

***When the World is Loud***

A downloadable audio theatre experience to support mental wellbeing. It was co-created by a company of 30 children and young people and 10 artists. The groups created and rehearsed via Zoom to make the final piece. No professional recording studio facilities were open during that Summer, so the team improvised and block booked a large meeting room in our office building for three weeks and installed a pop-up audio recording studio.

We held outdoor listening parties for the children, young people, their families and the artist contributors to participate in the audio theatre experience – bringing them together in celebration as a conclusion of the project.



*Youth Theatre Listening Party*

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

*When the World is Loud* has so far been downloaded by more than 3000 people in 23 countries worldwide.

It has also been used by other groups, for example Gateshead Young Carers, as a creative resource that they are able to access on their own terms.

*"This was a dream to be part of as a young person trying to adapt to the covid-19 lockdown. It prepared me for working with others online and taught me how to have fun doing it, giving me something to look forward to every week."*

Youth Theatre member

**Let Us Tell You**

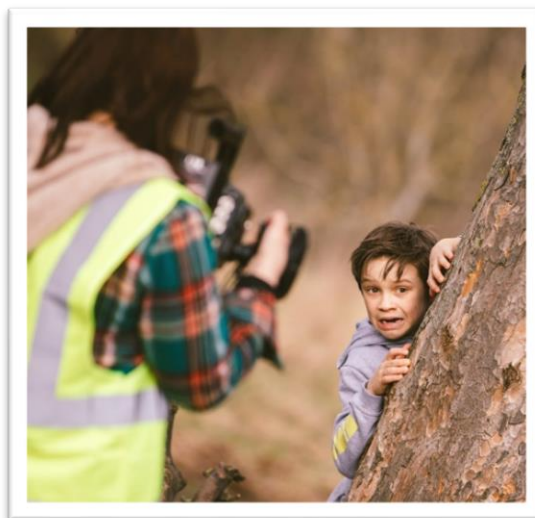
From Autumn 2020 to Spring 2021, our Youth Theatre groups devised and produced two short films, directly responding to their feedback that during the pandemic they had no voice – no one was interested in what they thought or were experiencing. This project was capturing their voice, presenting the things they wanted to say in a creative way and giving them a platform for this to be shared widely.

Because of the ongoing social restrictions in place when we were scheduled to film in March 2021, we decided to deliver an outdoor creative mental health intervention weekend, which we could do within the guidelines, and capturing the filmed content would be secondary to this primary objective.

The weekend was a resounding success, but the quality of the two films produced, *'My Monster Arrived'* and *'Thank you for Listening'* in partnership with Flygirl Films, greatly exceeded all our expectations.

To conclude this project, we held watch parties for the children and young people and the artists involved to come together to watch the completed films for the first time and celebrate what they had achieved.

*"It's SO fantastic @mortalfoolsUK are providing more theatre sessions for young people online again. Overheard snippets from daughter's class this eve & the positivity, care, support & FUN they bring into our home is just wonderful. V. excited to see what is produced this time."*  
Parent of Youth Theatre members via Twitter



*Filming 'My Monster Arrived'*



*Mental Health Intervention Weekend*

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

***My People***

This 2021 project was conceived as a piece of theatre-for-film, devised by a company of 9 young people in our ensemble group, alongside 4 artists. It featured original music composition and a rework of the set design from the cancelled *Relentless* production from 2020.

Sadly, filming was cancelled at the last minute because of a Covid-19 outbreak amongst the cast members. It is scheduled to be reworked in Autumn 2021.

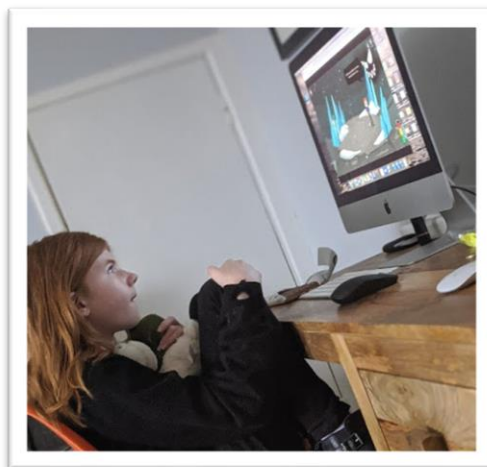
**FUTURE READY**

- Created a series of 14 artist-led participatory videos and distributed them to our special educational need school partners as a creative resource

**PROFESSIONAL THEATRE – MELVA**

- Collaborated with digital agency, Vida Creative, to make a Melva online storytelling game. We commissioned Danielle Burn, the original playwright, to write a new script in a game format, worked with a cast of 6 actors to record the audio with Vida Creative doing the game design and build. It was launched in January 2021 for families and schools, with c600 children using it before the end of the academic year. (This won the Journal Culture Award 2021 for Best Arts and Business Partnership.)
- Collaborated with Meerkat Films to produce a digital capture version of the original Melva stage play. This combined the best of live theatre with the storytelling capabilities of film, and has been edited as three episodes and a full-length version, with original composition by Anguaji Music and animation by Shepherd Illustration.
- The above will be launched as a comprehensive *Melva Digital Programme* for schools, groups and families in Autumn 2021.

*“[My class] constantly ask me when we are playing it next! The children love the character of Melva. The format is engaging, the game is attractive and it explores topics like anxiety in a relaxed and fun way.”*  
Deputy Headteacher – Cragside Primary School



*Tester Participant of the Game*



*School Tester Screening*

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

**CONNECT TRAINING FOR BUSINESSES**

- Delivered an online showcase event, including a live performance by young people on zoom, to showcase the business training offer and the work it supports to a multi-sector group of business representatives
- Delivered 4-day bespoke, in-person training programme with all staff at Gosforth Civic Theatre
- Delivered bespoke digital training with a diverse range of clients including ArtsWork Alliance, Bloomin Art, Newcastle University, Northern Stage, NIBE and IVE.

**ARTIST DEVELOPMENT**

- Commissioned specialist training by Little Cog (disability awareness), Curious Arts (LGBTQIA+ awareness), Company Three (devising with teenagers), Charity so White (anti-racism) and Lesley Wood (mental health first aid).
- Improved our practitioner support system including methods for creative planning; peer to peer observations; implementing new planning resources; mentoring; evaluation (using the PERMA Framework for mental wellbeing) feedback/feedforward and whole team evaluations.
- Recruited ten practitioners to our Associate team (through an entirely digital process) and provided bespoke professional development support for them as they started work on our programmes.

**OTHER OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

- Built a team of Young Digital Ambassadors who curated an ongoing programme of communications and online activities during first 6 months of the pandemic, including:
  - Weekly addresses
  - Panel discussions with other young people in national partner organisations on key issues facing young people
  - Creative online resources e.g. a Spotify Playlist
  - Presenting at national arts and education events
  - Securing commissions to showcase Mortal Fools' work with national partners e.g. Co-Creating Change network and Storyhouse Theatre, Chester
- Worked with University of Leeds to provide paid summer internships for two students in 2020
- Created new Company Assistant part-time employed roles

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

**ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- Updated our Charitable Objects, including the addition of working to achieve positive mental health outcome with beneficiaries
- Transitioned from freelance to employed roles for all core team staff
- Became a Living Wage employer
- Recruited two new Trustees and completed a skills audit of the board to inform further governance development needs
- Updated our recruitment processes to include an application form, blind recruitment process and transparent scoring system to be more equitable.
- Presented our work at key conferences and events, including Key Note speeches by our CEO at Culture Bridge Annual Conference 2020 and Wor Culture.
- Signed up as a working party member of Culture Against Racism, a regional anti-racism movement.
- Started development of articulating a delivery practice for co-creating with children and young people in both digital and in-person contexts.
- Invested more time in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our staff and associate team.
- Implemented new ways for young people to influence organisational planning - to consider how our projects meet their needs, especially with future implications of COVID-19.
- Began to integrate the PERMA wellbeing framework across all stages of project work.
- Removed participation fees for our Youth Theatre to improve accessibility.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

**PARTNERSHIPS**

**Local Authority & Strategic:**

- Northumberland County Council - working with the local authority and other county cultural organisations to deliver Cultural Strategy. We have a SLA to develop drama and theatre for young people.
- Northumberland Local Cultural Education Partnership (LCEP) - Our CEO is the Chair of Northumberland LCEP group, an initiative established by Culture Bridge North East to deliver the Arts Council's Cultural Education Challenge at a sub-regional level.
- Prudhoe Town Council – local funding support and advocacy
- Gateshead Council – funding support and advocacy

**Health:**

- Public Health Northumberland

**Voluntary Sector and Community-Based:**

- Children North East
- Youth Focus North East
- Prudhoe Youth Project
- Fuse Media Centre (local authority venue used to deliver activities in Prudhoe)

**Education:**

- Collingwood School and Media Arts College, Morpeth
- Duchess Community High School, Alnwick
- Horizons Trust schools
- 24 further schools for MELVA project
- Newcastle University

**Arts & Culture:**

- Gosforth Civic Theatre
- Company 3, London
- Anguaji Music
- Mark Melville
- Northern Stage, Newcastle
- Culture Bridge North East

**Digital Arts:**

- Vida Creative
- Meerkat Films
- Von Fox Productions
- Fly Girl Films
- Sound Ideas Media
- Shepherd Illustrations

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)**

**Financial Performance**

The charity had a successful multi-income stream financial business model, giving strong resilience to interruption of any one income stream. The pandemic presented interruption to all income streams simultaneously, leaving the charity highly vulnerable.

The charity did not qualify for many of the Government support schemes, including the Job Retention scheme. The decision was made to focus on finding ways to continue operations to offer services for beneficiaries throughout the pandemic.

At the time of writing, the charity has successfully managed to return to a new version of a multi-income stream model through a series of key financial developments:

- Securing emergency grant income from Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Northumberland County Council and Arts Council England / DCMS totaling £274,995.
- Arranging with existing grant funders to extend the timeframe for delivery of activities / repurpose the funding.
- Redesigning and launching a new programme of training for businesses – called CONNECT – initially focusing on digital delivery and successfully engaging a national portfolio of multi-sector clients and participants.
- Utilising grant funding to create a fully digital version of our highly successful live *Melva Creative Intervention* programme, providing a new income generation stream and the potential for a national / international reach.
- Increasing core team roles to provide greater capacity for business development and income generation.

The result of this has been a c65% addition to turnover during the 16-month period of these accounts and a return to financial stability.

**Financial Review**

The financial out-turn for the period is an overall unrestricted surplus of £42,739 (2019: Unrestricted surplus of £19,704), leaving a balance on Unrestricted Funds of £83,840 at 31 March 2021.

Free reserves, defined as unrestricted funds, less the value of any designated funds and the net book value of unrestricted Tangible Fixed Assets, are £83,708.

The Trustees consider the financial performance of the charity to be satisfactory.

# MORTAL FOOLS

## (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

### TRUSTEES' REPORT

*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

#### PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

Mortal Fools has made a significant step-change in the last year or so, and plans to continue on this trajectory. There are some key development milestones coming up in the next year, including a focus on:

- **Accessibility** – we are reconsidering who our primary beneficiaries should be and how we can more effectively reach those who will really benefit from our work. Delivering our work digitally has enabled us to reach new beneficiaries and create opportunities for us to engage with them more on their own terms. Long term partnerships are an integral part of this work.
- **Quality** – We are training all our staff team in a new person-centred delivery practice (supported by Paul Hamlyn Foundation) to improve the artistic quality of our work, deepen engagement, manage consistency of delivery across our growing programmes.
- **National launch of new digital creative programmes** – this will be the *Melva Digital Programme* in the first instance in Autumn 2021. We are expecting this to help us reach a much wider national audience, together with becoming a reliable and significant new unrestricted income source to support with core operational costs and supplementing other young people's programmes.
- **Embedding a hybrid in-person and digital operations and delivery model** – we have learned so much in the last 16 months, and found new ways to engage with a wider range of beneficiaries. The coming year will continue to be one of extensive learning as we roll out our digital programmes to a national audience and experiment with new creative partnerships with digital specialists.
- **Balancing hyper-local community impact and national audience reach** – our long term plan is to root ourselves in a community who are keen to work with us and will really benefit from our type of work. To help us do this, we are exploring potential long-term premises that will support both our administrative and delivery needs and be in a community that is not well provided for.

#### Key Development Goals

1. Establish a new main operational base with 'front door visibility', working with Community and Youth partners to establish a new hub for children and young people's creativity and wellbeing, and experiment with running ongoing programmes of activity in multiple locations.
2. Resume touring of our live work across the North East and wider North
3. Develop further theatre-for-film productions and accompanying digital assets and resources for participatory activity
4. Build our two newly-created unrestricted income streams – CONNECT training programme and Melva Digital Programme to generate c£100k jointly
5. Renegotiate a further multi-year SLA agreement with NCC from 2022 onwards
6. Apply to become an Arts Council England National Portfolio organisation
7. Continue to build the core staff team with recruitment in Autumn 2021 (Business and Finance Manager and Practitioner x 2)
8. Identify and develop a sharable model of the 'Mortal Fools Practice' and test this with multi-sector settings e.g. Health and Youth
9. Establish a programme of guest artists, to bring new skills from diverse artists and companies into the organisation
10. Recruit 3-6 trustees with broader and more diverse lived experiences, for example young people, LGBTQIA+ people, Black, Asian and global majority people, disabled people and people who have experienced poverty.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*For the period ended 31 March 2021*

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES**

The Trustees (who are also the Directors of Mortal Fools for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial period which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

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

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

Signed on behalf of the Trustees



**Richard Wise**  
**Trustee**  
**23 September 2021**

# **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS ON THE UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS OF MORTAL FOOLS LIMITED PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

I hereby report to the Trustees of Mortal Fools (Charity Registration Number 1153400) on my examination of the accounts for the period ended 31 March 2021 set out on pages 26 to 40.

## **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity's trustees (and also its directors for the purposes of company law), you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

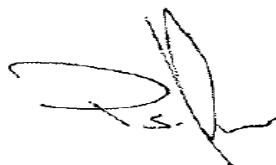
## **Independent Examiner's Statement**

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000, your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountant in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods or principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102)).

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.



**Pete O'Hara, FCA, Chartered Accountant**  
**Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales**

4 Stoneyhurst Road West, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1PG

23 September 2021

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**FOR THE 16 MONTH PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2019 £
<b>Income</b>					
Income from Investments	3	400	-	400	234
Income from Charitable Activities	4	70,051	404,406	474,457	287,118
Income from Donations & Legacies	5	11,033	-	11,033	2,588
		<b>81,484</b>	<b>404,406</b>	<b>485,890</b>	<b>289,940</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Expenditure on Raising Funds	6	-	-	-	6,480
Expenditure on Charitable Activities	7	38,745	366,401	405,146	211,598
		<b>38,745</b>	<b>366,401</b>	<b>405,146</b>	<b>218,078</b>
<b>Net Income/(Expenditure)</b>		<b>42,739</b>	<b>38,005</b>	<b>80,744</b>	<b>71,862</b>
Balance brought forward		41,101	87,170	128,271	56,409
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>£83,840</b>	<b>£125,175</b>	<b>£209,015</b>	<b>£128,271</b>

The notes on pages 28 to 40 form part of the financial statements.

All of the activities of the company are classed as continuing.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the period and therefore a statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION/BALANCE SHEET**  
**AS AT 31 MARCH 2021**

	Notes	31 March 2021 £	30 Nov 2019 £
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Tangible Fixed Assets	10	3,026	400
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Debtors	11	27,154	79,556
Cash At Bank & In Hand		216,303	70,233
		<u>243,457</u>	<u>149,789</u>
<b>Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year</b>	12	(37,468)	(21,918)
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)		<u>205,989</u>	<u>127,871</u>
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	13	<u><b>£209,015</b></u>	<u><b>£128,271</b></u>
<b>Represented by:</b>			
Unrestricted Reserves	14	83,840	41,101
Restricted Reserves	14	125,175	87,170
		<u><b>£209,015</b></u>	<u><b>£128,271</b></u>

The notes on pages 28 to 40 form part of the financial statements.

The Trustees are satisfied that for the period ended 31 March 2021 the charity was entitled to exemption under section 477(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees also confirm that the Members have not required the charity to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

(i) ensuring that the charity keeps adequate accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act, and

(ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity as at the end of the financial period and of its profit or loss for the financial period in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charity.

**These financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 23 September 2021 and signed on their behalf:**



**Richard Wise**  
**Trustee**  
**Company Registration Number 08102487**

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

**1. Accounting Policies**

**Basis of Preparation**

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable United Kingdom accounting standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 – 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland' ('FRS 102'), and with the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, modified to include certain financial instruments at fair value.

Advantage has been taken of the provisions in the SORP for Charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a statement of cashflows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity.

**Income**

All income is included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income, any performance related conditions attached have been met or are fully within the control of the charity, the income is considered probable and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Donations and legacy income is received by way of donations, legacies, grants and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Where legacies have been notified to the charity but the criteria for income recognition have not been met, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.
- Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.
- Investment income is included when receivable.
- Income from charitable trading activity is accounted for when earned.
- Other income is accounted for when receivable.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

**1. Accounting Policies (Continued)**

**Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:

- Costs of raising funds comprise the costs associated with attracting donations, grants and legacies and the costs of trading for fundraising purposes.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.
- Other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

**Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation**

Depreciation is provided on any fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the assets over their remaining useful lives as follows:

- IT Equipment - 33% per annum straight line
- Office Equipment – 25% per annum straight line

A full period's depreciation charge is applied in the period of acquisition and no charge is made in the period of disposal.

**Impairment of Fixed Assets**

A review for indicators of impairment is carried out at each reporting date, with the recoverable amount being estimated where such indicators exist. Where the carrying value exceeds the recoverable amount, the asset is impaired accordingly. Prior impairments are also reviewed for possible reversal at each reporting date.

**Financial Instruments**

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the charity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs.

Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted.

Debt instruments are subsequently measured at amortised cost where there is a material adjustment.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

**1. Accounting Policies (Continued)**

**Fund Accounting**

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the purposes of the charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for specific purposes.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

**Taxation Status**

Mortal Fools is a Charity registered under the 1960 Charities Act and is accorded exemption from liability to taxation on its income under S505 Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988.

**Going Concern**

There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

**Judgements and Key Sources of Estimation Uncertainty**

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

There are no significant judgements or estimation uncertainty included within the financial statements.

**2. Legal Status**

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.

**3. Income from Investments**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2019</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Interest on cash deposits	400	-	400	234
	<b>£400</b>	<b>£-</b>	<b>£400</b>	<b>£234</b>

The 2019 total of £234 relates wholly to Unrestricted Funds.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

**4. Income from Charitable Activities**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2019</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Grant Income</b>				
#iWill Social Action Fund	-	-	-	4,850
1989 Willan Charitable Trust	-	8,000	8,000	-
Arts Council England	-	190,000	190,000	106,600
Austin and Hope Pilkington Trust	-	-	-	1,000
Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust	-	500	500	500
Community First Fund	-	-	-	8,000
Community Foundation	5,000	-	5,000	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	30,000	30,000	20,000
Growth & Resilience Fund	-	-	-	23,000
High Sheriff of Northumberland	-	1,000	1,000	1,000
John D Endowment	-	1,985	1,985	-
Joicey Trust	-	3,000	3,000	3,000
NHS N'land Clinical Commissioning Group	-	30,000	30,000	-
Northern Powergrid	-	3,930	3,930	-
Northumberland Children's Trust	-	20,000	20,000	10,000
Northumberland County Council	10,000	53,396	63,396	30,200
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	-	20,000	20,000	-
Pen & Palette Club Fund	-	1,000	1,000	-
People's Powerhouse	-	500	500	-
Prudhoe Town Council	-	2,210	2,210	700
Roland Cookson Community Fund	-	6,000	6,000	-
Rothley Trust	-	1,000	1,000	-
Sir James Knott Trust	-	5,000	5,000	5,000
Sylvia Waddilove Foundation UK	-	1,000	1,000	-
The Key UK	-	-	-	2,000
UK Youth	-	13,385	13,385	-
Virgin Money Foundation	-	500	500	-
Wellesley Trust Fund	-	10,000	10,000	10,000
	<b>15,000</b>	<b>402,406</b>	<b>417,406</b>	<b>225,850</b>

Continued overleaf...

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

**4. Income from Charitable Activities (Cont.)**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021 £	2019 £
<b>Earned Income</b>				
Box Office Takings	994	-	994	1,377
Drama Session Fees	5,011	-	5,011	9,737
Partner Contributions	5,650	2,000	7,650	7,300
Refreshment & Other Sundry Sales	-	-	-	7
Service/Producer Fees	14,405	-	14,405	24,724
Training Fees	28,991	-	28,991	18,123
	<b>55,051</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>57,051</b>	<b>61,268</b>
	<b>£70,051</b>	<b>£404,406</b>	<b>£474,457</b>	<b>£287,118</b>

Of the 2019 total of £287,118, £54,268 relates to Unrestricted Funds and £232,850 to Restricted Funds.

**5. Income from Donations & Legacies**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021 £	2019 £
Donations	5,756	-	5,756	2,588
Theatre Tax Relief	5,277	-	5,277	-
	<b>£11,033</b>	<b>£-</b>	<b>£11,033</b>	<b>£2,588</b>

The 2019 total of £2,588 relates wholly to Unrestricted Funds.

**6. Expenditure on Raising Funds**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021 £	2019 £
Fundraising Consultancy	-	-	-	6,480
	<b>£-</b>	<b>£-</b>	<b>£-</b>	<b>£6,480</b>

The 2019 total of £6,480 relates wholly to Restricted Funds.

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

**7. Total Expenditure on Charitable Activities**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021 £	2019 £
<b>Production &amp; Activity Costs</b>				
Salaries & On Costs	-	47,445	47,445	-
Freelance Project Worker Fees	22,432	160,530	182,962	85,283
Venue Hire & Staging Costs	1,496	49,697	51,193	42,768
Design, Print & Promotional Materials	476	5,381	5,857	4,188
<b>Support Costs</b>				
Central Staffing Costs - Freelance Team	5,667	76,925	82,592	60,600
Administrative Costs	5,624	11,802	17,426	13,130
Staff Training	1,625	10,918	12,543	2,769
Depreciation	267	1,737	2,004	200
<b>Governance Costs</b>				
Accountancy Fees	-	1,320	1,320	1,320
Board Costs	36	-	36	273
Legal & Professional	1,122	646	1,768	1,067
	<b>£38,745</b>	<b>£366,401</b>	<b>£405,146</b>	<b>£211,598</b>

Of the 2019 total of £211,598, £37,386 relates to Unrestricted Funds and £174,212 to Restricted Funds.

**8. Net Movement in Funds**

	2021 £	2019 £
The net movement in Funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Depreciation of Owned Fixed Assets	2,004	200
Independent Examiner's Fees – Independent Examination	900	900
Independent Examiner's Fees – Other Services	420	420

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

**9. Staff Costs & Directors' Remuneration**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2019</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Gross Salary Costs	46,128	-
Employer's National Insurance	-	-
Employer's Pension Contributions	1,317	-
	<b>£47,445</b>	<b>£-</b>

No employee received remuneration of more than £60,000 during the year (2019: Nil).

The average number of staff employed during the year, calculated as full-time equivalents, was as follows:

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>No.</b>	<b>No.</b>
Artistic Production and Support	6	-

No remuneration was paid to any Trustees in the period.

No travel and subsistence expenses were reimbursed to Trustees in respect of their attendance at meetings of the charity (2019: £Nil).

**10. Tangible Fixed Assets**

	<b>IT &amp; Office Equipment</b>	<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Cost</b>		
At 1 December 2019	1,458	1,458
Additions in period	4,630	4,630
At 31 March 2021	<b>6,088</b>	<b>6,088</b>
<b>Accumulated Depreciation</b>		
At 1 December 2019	1,058	1,058
Charge for period	2,004	2,004
At 31 March 2021	<b>3,062</b>	<b>3,062</b>
<b>Net Book Value</b>		
At 31 March 2021	<b>£3,026</b>	<b>£3,026</b>
At 1 December 2019	£400	£400

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

**11. Debtors**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2019</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Trade Debtors	925	10,950
Other Taxes & Social Security Costs	3,960	-
Accrued Income	20,633	67,300
Prepayments	1,636	1,306
	<b>£27,154</b>	<b>£79,556</b>

All sums are due within 1 year.

**12. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2019</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Trade Creditors	10,038	8,092
Other Creditors - Pension Contributions Due	2,635	-
Other Creditors - Net Salaries Due	10,597	-
Accruals	14,198	13,826
	<b>£37,468</b>	<b>£21,918</b>

**13. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2019</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Fixed Assets	132	2,894	3,026	400
Debtors	10,636	16,518	27,154	79,556
Cash at Bank and In Hand	73,780	142,523	216,303	70,233
Creditors – Due Within 1 Year	(708)	(36,760)	(37,468)	(21,918)
	<b>£83,840</b>	<b>£125,175</b>	<b>£209,015</b>	<b>£128,271</b>

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

**14. Analysis of Charitable Funds**

	Fund at 1 Dec 2019 £	Income in Year £	Expenditure in Year £	Fund at 31 March 2021 £
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>				
Charity General Fund	41,101	81,484	(38,745)	83,840
<b>Restricted Funds</b>				
The 1989 Willan Charitable Trust at the Community Foundation serving Tyne & Wear and Northumberland (CFTWN)		8,000	-	8,000
#iWill Social Action Fund at the CFTWN	4,850	-	(630)	4,220
Arts Council England (ACE) - Emergency Response Fund	-	35,000	(35,000)	-
ACE - Cultural Recovery Fund		140,000	(140,000)	-
ACE - National Lottery Project Grants - Future Ready 2020 Development	-	15,000	(1,650)	13,350
ACE - National Lottery Project Grants – MELVA 2019-20	8,594	-	(8,594)	-
ACE - National Lottery Project Grants - Young People's Theatre Exchange 2019-21	43,000	-	(17,764)	25,236
Austin and Hope Pilkington Trust	1,000	-	(1,000)	-
Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust	-	500	(500)	-
Collingwood School and Media Arts College - Future Ready 2020	3,500	-	(3,500)	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	30,000	(7,830)	22,170
Gateshead Council	-	2,000	(2,000)	-
Growth & Resilience Fund at the CFTWN	6,049	-	(6,049)	-
High Sheriff of Northumberland Youth Against Crime Scheme at the CFTWN	1,000	1,000	(1,000)	1,000

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

**14. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)**

	Fund at 1 December 2019	Incoming Resources in Year	Resources Expended in Year	Fund at 31 March 2021
John D Endowment Fund at the CFTWN	-	1,985	(1,985)	-
The Joicey Trust	3,000	3,000	(3,000)	3,000
NHS Northumberland CCG – Children and Young People’s Trailblazers	-	30,000	(30,000)	-
Northern Powergrid at the CFTWN	-	3,930	(3,930)	-
Northumberland Children’s Trust	-	20,000	(10,000)	10,000
Northumberland County Council (CC) - Young People’s Theatre Exchange project	-	5,000	(2,500)	2,500
Northumberland CC - Community Chest Scheme	-	5,000	(2,450)	2,550
Northumberland CC – EVERYTHING project	-	3,675	(3,675)	-
Northumberland CC – Arts and Heritage SLA	-	19,721	(8,924)	10,797
Northumberland CC Public Health - Drama Intervention Programme - Melva Online	-	20,000	(20,000)	-
Northumberland CC - Great Northumberland Winter Festival 2019	1,075	-	(1,075)	-
Northumberland CC – MELVA 2019/20 contribution	2	-	(2)	-
Northumberland CC – Culture & Heritage Youth Theatre Project	3,200	-	(3,200)	-
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	-	20,000	(20,000)	-
Pen & Palette Club Fund within the North East Fund for the Arts at the CFTWN	-	1,000	(1,000)	-
People’s Powerhouse	-	500	(500)	-
Prudhoe Town Council Grant Aid	700	750	(1,450)	-

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

**14. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)**

	Fund at 1 December 2019	Incoming Resources in Year	Resources Expended in Year	Fund at 31 March 2021
Prudhoe Town Council Grant Aid Oct 2020 - Youth Work Development	-	1,460	-	1,460
Roland Cookson Community Fund at the CFTWN	-	6,000	(2,199)	3,801
Rothley Trust	400	1,000	(844)	556
Sir James Knott Trust	5,000	5,000	(5,000)	5,000
The Sylvia Waddilove Foundation UK Covid-19 Emergency Fund	-	1,000	(1,000)	-
The UK Youth Fund, supported by DCMS and the Youth Accelerator Fund.	-	13,385	(13,385)	-
Virgin Money Foundation	-	500	(500)	-
The Wellesley Trust Fund at the CFTWN	5,800	10,000	(4,265)	11,535
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>87,170</b>	<b>404,406</b>	<b>(366,401)</b>	<b>125,175</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>£128,271</b>	<b>£485,890</b>	<b>£(405,146)</b>	<b>£209,015</b>

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

**14. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)**

Name of Restricted Fund	Description, Nature & Purpose of the Restricted Fund
Creatives of the Future / Young Leaders	A suite of activities and projects to increase the provision and quality of drama activities for children and young people across Northumberland including young person led activities and training and development for artists specialising in delivering this work.
EVERYTHING	A project with young people related to climate change and NCC's commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030
Future Ready	A programme using a theatre production as a vehicle to develop confidence, aspirations and social and emotional skills of young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to prepare them for the transition from education into adult life
Melva	A creative intervention programme using a theatre production and wraparound activities to support children aged 7-11 with anxiety, live programme touring to schools and digital programme (digital captured theatre show and online storytelling game) produced in 2021.
Mortal Fools Youth Theatre (previously known as Tyne Valley Youth Theatre)	Our flagship youth theatre in West Northumberland, with around 150 members aged 8-19 who take part in a diverse annual programme of projects and activities

**MORTAL FOOLS**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**  
**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
***FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021***

**15. Related Party Transactions**

There were no related party transactions during this period.

**16. Taxation**

The company is a registered charity and no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

**17. Financial Commitments**

No material financial commitments have been made in respect of future financial periods.

**18. Company Limited by Guarantee**

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

There are currently 6 members of the company (2019: 7).