

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

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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)
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<b>Bankers</b>	Triodos Bank, Deanery Road, Bristol, BS1 5AS
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<b>Independent Examiner</b>	Mr P O'Hara FCA, 4 Stoneyhurst Road West, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1PG
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**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.

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**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.

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**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.

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**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.

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**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.



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**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

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**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.

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**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.

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**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.

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**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.

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**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.

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**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.

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## **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***

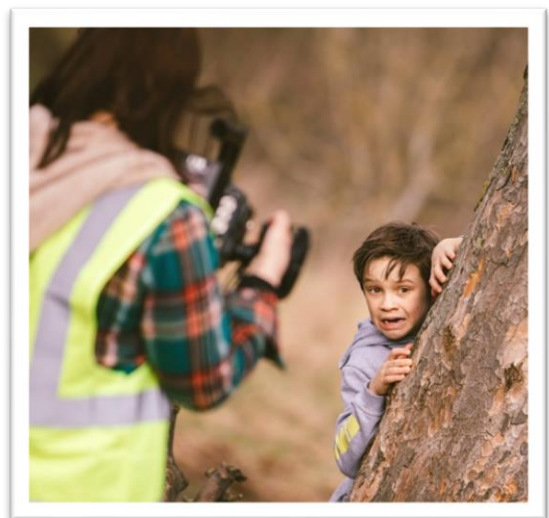
From Autumn 2020 to Spring 2021, our Youth Theatre groups devised and produced two short films, directly responding to their feedback that during the pandemic they had no voice – no one was interested in what they thought or were experiencing. This project was capturing their voice, presenting the things 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.

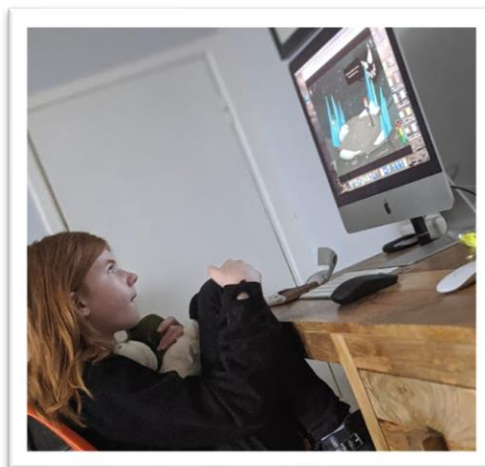
## **FUTURE READY**

- 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)**  
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**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.

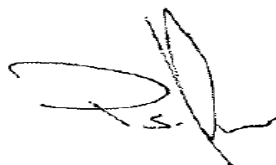
## **Independent Examiner's Statement**

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...

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**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.



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**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

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**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>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	<b>£400</b>	<b>£400</b>

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**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>

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**14. Analysis of Charitable Funds**

	<b>Fund at 1 Dec 2019 £</b>	<b>Income in Year £</b>	<b>Expenditure in Year £</b>	<b>Fund at 31 March 2021 £</b>
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>				
Charity General Fund	<b>41,101</b>	<b>81,484</b>	<b>(38,745)</b>	<b>83,840</b>
<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

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

	<b>Fund at 1 December 2019</b>	<b>Incoming Resources in Year</b>	<b>Resources Expended in Year</b>	<b>Fund at 31 March 2021</b>
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)	-

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

	<b>Fund at 1 December 2019</b>	<b>Incoming Resources in Year</b>	<b>Resources Expended in Year</b>	<b>Fund at 31 March 2021</b>
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>

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

<b>Name of Restricted Fund</b>	<b>Description, Nature &amp; Purpose of the Restricted Fund</b>
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

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**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).