

**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

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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 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-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, 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, 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.

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**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.

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**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.

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**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.

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**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



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**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.

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**OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)**

**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.

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.

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**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,i,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

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**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.

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**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.

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**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**

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*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**

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**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*



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**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.

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

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**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**  
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**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**  
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**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**  
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**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**5. Income from Donations & Legacies**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds £</b>	<b>Restricted Funds £</b>	<b>2023 £</b>	<b>2022 £</b>
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**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds £</b>	<b>Restricted Funds £</b>	<b>2023 £</b>	<b>2022 £</b>
<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**

	<b>2023 £</b>	<b>2022 £</b>
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

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**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>Cost</b>		
At 1 April 2022	31,799	31,799
Additions in year	5,398	5,398
At 31 March 2023	<b>37,197</b>	<b>37,197</b>
<b>Accumulated Depreciation</b>		
At 1 April 2022	12,891	12,891
Charge for year	11,181	11,181
At 31 March 2023	<b>24,072</b>	<b>24,072</b>
<b>Net Book Value</b>		
At 31 March 2023	<b>£13,125</b>	<b>£13,125</b>
At 1 April 2022	<b>£18,908</b>	<b>£18,908</b>

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**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>

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**13. Analysis of Charitable Funds**

	<b>Fund at 1 April 2022 £</b>	<b>Income in Year £</b>	<b>Expenditure in Year £</b>	<b>Fund at 31 March 2023 £</b>
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>				
Charity General Fund	<b>122,584</b>	<b>159,030</b>	<b>(142,140)</b>	<b>139,474</b>
<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)	-

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

	<b>Fund at 1 April 2022 £</b>	<b>Income in Year £</b>	<b>Expenditure in Year £</b>	<b>Fund at 31 March 2023 £</b>
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

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

	<b>Fund at 1 April 2022 £</b>	<b>Income in Year £</b>	<b>Expenditure in Year £</b>	<b>Fund at 31 March 2023 £</b>
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.

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

<b>Name of Restricted Fund</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Allocation of the Restricted Fund</b>
<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 <u>Young Cultural Leaders</u> programme and associated social action events/activities.
<i>ACE PG When This Is Over</i>	Towards the cost of <u>When This Is Over</u> , 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.

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

<b>Name of Restricted Fund</b>	<b>Purpose &amp; Allocation of the Restricted Fund</b>
<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> .

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**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.

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**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).