

Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Registered Charity Number 1161020

THE ATKINSON DEVELOPMENT TRUST

Improving local people's lives through art and heritage



Trustees' Annual Report 2021-2022

The Atkinson Development Trust
Trustees' Annual Report
for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity name: The Atkinson Development Trust

Registered charity number: 1161020

Principal address:

The Atkinson
Lord Street
Southport
MERSEYSIDE
PR8 1DB

Trustees:

Jo Kay (Chair)
Ian Bryden (Treasurer)
Laura Bell
Helen Birnbaum
Jennifer Cope
Councillor Janet Grace
Emma Harrison (Designated Representative, The Atkinson)
Lindsey Holding
Nathan Marsh
Stephen Whittle (Designated Representative, The Atkinson)

Executive Summary

The Atkinson Development Trust continued to be impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic during the 2021/22 reporting period. Many of our activities were limited for at least part of the year, including The Atkinson Well-Being Choir, which was unable to meet in person in the first quarter and our Subsidised Tickets for Schools programme which was affected by the reduced seating capacity for The Atkinson's panto due to the need for audiences to be socially distanced.

However, the work we undertook in the previous year to determine the skill set and skills gap within our Board and the consequent development of our Skills Matrix, enabled us to undertake a comprehensive new Trustee recruitment programme. This resulted in the appointment of four excellent new Trustees, plus a highly skilled volunteer who took on an informal Membership Liaison Manager role. The Trust continued to meet via Zoom during this year but these new appointments brought fresh thinking and renewed vigour to our meetings. They also brought essential skills to our Board, which will ensure the Trust continues to provide effective and innovative support to The Atkinson and in bringing the heritage of Sefton alive for its visitors both local and from further afield.

Our membership scheme, which was only launched in the previous year, has performed very well, raising £1,535. This was ahead of our Year 1 income target of £1,500, despite the reduced number of visitors to The Atkinson.

As The Atkinson began to open its doors during this year, our unrestricted income received through collection boxes and events increased significantly, raising £3,444 in total. We also put the wheels in motion and completed much of the groundwork for launching a new Adopt A Teddy scheme - a fundraising initiative linked to an exhibition within The Atkinson. This will be launched in the next reporting period and will raise unrestricted income for the Trust.

Finally, we supported the acquisition or restoration of a number of key artefacts for The Atkinson's collections.

All in all, whilst we cannot deny that the ongoing pandemic has impacted the Trust's activities both fundraising and charitable during this year, we have increased our activity on the previous year and maintained our presence and effectiveness in achieving our aims during this challenging time.

Who we are

The Atkinson Development Trust (TADT) is a small charity run by a committed Board of skilled volunteers and a part-time paid Administrator with a shared love of The Atkinson and Sefton.

We believe in the transformative power of art and that communities thrive best when they have civic pride, a sense of place and a feeling of connection and heritage within a community. The Atkinson Development Trust was established to help The Atkinson use its collections and building to make a positive impact on local people's lives and to tell Sefton's stories.



The Atkinson is the council-owned arts centre in the heart of Southport, which serves the whole borough of Sefton. The Atkinson is home to free-to-access galleries, museum and Southport's main library, plus a main fixed-seating theatre and smaller flexible seating Studio used for ticketed events spanning all types of performing arts, talks and film. Added to this is a social enterprise café run by Autism Initiatives and a gift shop.

What we do

The Trust was set up to work in partnership with The Atkinson. We raise money from individuals, businesses and funding bodies in order to support The Atkinson to use its heritage and art collections to connect with people.

Our main focus is social impact: we have particular interest in supporting projects which benefit the wellbeing of the more disadvantaged and under-represented people in our local community. For example, children in areas of economic deprivation, disabled people and their families, or older people at risk of loneliness and isolation.

More broadly, our work aims to connect people with local stories and improve access to the collections and the building. We support conservation and acquisitions when this enables new stories to be shared with the public, or unlocks new engagement projects.

We work supportively with The Atkinson to expand and enhance their work. We do not work directly with beneficiaries and we do not influence the programming or running of the venue. The Trust operates within Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council (Sefton MBC), Merseyside. Our work is primarily aimed at, but not limited to, those within the administrative area of Sefton Council and is concerned with the arts, cultural and heritage managed by Sefton MBC with a particular focus on The Atkinson.

Our ability to step outside the funding and strategic restrictions associated with the public sector means we are able to apply for different funding and open conversations with potential donors which a Council-run service would struggle to have. It has also allowed us to maximise public donations by claiming Gift Aid where possible.

Our aims

- **To connect people with local stories and (global) cultural activity**
Encouraging the public to participate in and contribute to arts, cultural and heritage activities. We want to bring people together, connect them with their community, celebrate the cultural heritage of the area and beyond to enable creative expression.
- **To improve access to and engagement with the collections and the building**
Opening up Sefton's art, culture and heritage to everyone. This might mean improving physical access through better facilities or supporting the restoration of an artwork to enable it to go on public display.
- **To have a positive impact on local people's lives**
Facilitating engagement with cultural activity for the positive impact it can have upon the lives and wellbeing of the public. We have a particular interest in people who are typically under-represented among arts audiences due to a range of social, economic and physical barriers which they may experience.

Statutory declaration: The Trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant.

Format and function of the Trust

Structure

The Atkinson Development Trust (TADT) is a charitable incorporated organisation which was registered as a charity with the Charity Commission on 23 March 2015.

The Trust is governed by a Board who are Trustees of the charity. TADT supports equal opportunities and we welcome applications from all suitably qualified persons regardless of their race, gender, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or age. Prospective Trustees are targeted according to the skills needed by the Board. After recruitment and vetting, Trustees are appointed by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the Trustees. All Trustees are briefed on their responsibilities as Trustees prior to their acceptance of the role. They have individual and collective responsibility for the management of the charity and its funds.

Governance

Governance of the Trust remained robust during the course of 2021-22. The following Trustees were appointed to the Board:

- Laura Bell, appointed 12 October 2021
- Helen Birnbaum, appointed 12 October 2021
- Nathan March, appointed 12 October 2021

The Trustees hold meetings every 4-6 weeks to discuss ideas and make decisions.

Day-to-day running of the Trust is delegated to the Administrator, with strategic steer from The Chair and all financial transactions are overseen by the Treasurer.

Management

It is the Trustees' duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity might be exposed, and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

The Trustees actively review the major risks which the charity faces on a regular basis through regular meetings of the Trustees which cover operational and financial reviews.

In September 2021, we recruited a Membership Volunteer, Margaret Jolley, to help with the day-to-day administration and stewardship of our members. Margaret is overseen by the Chair and has done a fantastic job in implementing a regular communication calendar with new and existing members. We also have one employee - a paid, part-time freelance Administrator. Our Data Manager controls access to all data covered by GDPR and the Administrator has no access to the bank accounts or authority for authorising any payments,

Trustees regularly examine other risks that may become applicable as new situations arise, and develop policies and procedures to mitigate those risks.

Overview of Activities in 2021/22

Charitable Activities

As in previous years our two key charitable activities have been The Wellbeing Choir and Subsidised Tickets for Schools. Whilst both these projects were able to continue in some form during 2021/22 they continued to be hit by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Atkinson Wellbeing Choir

For the first quarter 21/22 the choir was unable to meet in person, but kept in contact via a WhatsApp group and the Zoom meetings we instigated, subsequently organised by the choir's leader. The Choir was able to meet once again on 7 September 2021 as Covid restrictions eased.



Members were increasingly encouraged to donate towards the cost of choir sessions as part of a planned move to a paid model by the end of the financial year, in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of the choir. This change in funding model was implemented. Attendees now pay a small fee to cover the cost of the singing tuition. The Atkinson provides free space and staffing, and the charity will still fund any shortfall if required. It will be monitored in the first half of 2022/23 to ensure the Choir can continue under this self-funding model without attenders being excluded for financial reasons.

If the Wellbeing Choir is to continue as hoped as a self-funded venture, decisions have to be made about whether a second choir will be funded and/or if the Trust is required to support development of the Wellbeing Choir in some capacity going forward.

Subsidised Tickets for Schools

Whilst The Atkinson was able to put on a Covid-compliant pantomime, seating capacity was significantly reduced: only a quarter of seats were available, to allow for social distancing. This radically limited what was possible in terms of offering Trust funded /subsidised seats to schools with high pupil premium (high number of pupils identified by the Government as being disadvantaged). The popularity of The Atkinson's panto at Christmas 2021 was significantly bolstered as it became the only professional pantomime offered in Southport and surrounding areas. Attendance was much higher than expected, and with the reduced, socially distanced capacity, there wasn't the spare capacity to invite schools, particularly those that needed financial assistance, to attend.

Instead, the Board made the decision to use some of the earmarked funds to enable a small party of vulnerable families being supported by Sefton Council's Social Services team to attend the pantomime for free, enabling them to share a cultural experience they'd not otherwise have been able to access. Sadly, the particular performance they attended was cut short due to an emergency evacuation. Unfortunately it wasn't possible to reschedule, as the event was close to the end of the run and other shows were sold out. We did not have direct contact details to invite the same families to return for a different event, so it was a disappointing outcome - however, with a longer lead-in this year, it's something we'd like to work on.

The Board will reconsider its approach to the funding of the subsidised Tickets for Schools scheme in 2022/23 to ensure the project is being most effective in giving disadvantaged young people the opportunity to attend live theatre.

Unspent funds committed to these projects in the accounts will be rolled over to the next financial year.

Acquisitions and Restorations

In 2021/22 the Trust funded the acquisition of artworks for The Atkinson's collections:

- May 2021 - £2,925 towards the purchase of Gordon Cheung's Jin, Jin, Ji
- December 2021 - £2,500 for the purchase of Paul Kenny's Iona Sun

A winged heart scarab (pictured) from the Egyptology collection was sent for restoration, funded by the Trust. Unfortunately the restoration of this piece has been delayed due to ill-health of the restorer. It is hoped restoration will be completed within the next reporting period.



Fundraising Activities

Donations

In the later part of the year The Atkinson was able to re-open which increasingly enabled both cash donations at the site and online donations, albeit significantly lower than would be normal.

Membership

Despite the challenges of another pandemic year, we made modest progress with sales of Memberships. At the end of the financial year and 13 months after the membership was relaunched we have 40 members, bringing in a total membership income of £1,535.00. This was just above our Year 1 income target of £1,500.00 and is a fantastic achievement considering the ongoing impact the pandemic had on recruitment and our ability to fulfil our membership promises with supporters. As we continue to move beyond the pandemic next year we are optimistic that membership will continue to grow both in supporter numbers and income.

AmazonSmile

In November 2021, the Trust signed up to AmazonSmile which allows Amazon shoppers to select The Atkinson Development Trust to receive 0.5% of their purchase cost as a donation from Amazon Foundation. In 2021/22 reporting year, the Trust received a total donation of £11.65.

Adopt A Teddy

During 2021/22 the Trust worked closely with The Atkinson on developing a new Adopt A Teddy fundraising initiative to link with The Atkinson new display of teddy bears (pictured).

The Trust allocated £2,500 to fund the starting of this fundraising initiative, which includes the design and creation of an adoption pack for donors.



The progress of this initiative has been delayed due to staff changes and shortages at The Atkinson but it is anticipated that it will be launched in the next reporting period.

Unrestricted funds

As well as the £1,535.00 received from the Trust's relaunched membership scheme, unrestricted funds were received through cash donations via the collecting boxes, which provided £978.20 and donations for events, which raised £2,466.28. The Trust also applied for a grant from the Co-op but were unsuccessful.

Restricted Funds

We received £785.48 from members of the Wellbeing Choir. This has been added to the budget which is dedicated for the Choir.

Gift Aid

With donations dramatically reduced because of Covid closures we were only able to claim £246.50 for the period 2021 to 2022.

Awareness-Raising Activities

Promotion of the Board's activities was put on hold largely due to the lack of footfall in The Atkinson, the restrictions on hard-copy materials in distribution racks and a lack of activity to promote (all due to Covid-19). There was also a lack of capacity amongst Trustees whilst we focussed on recruitment.

Membership was promoted via The Atkinson's digital marketing channels, including social media, e-newsletter, website plus in-house digital screens. When print could be re-introduced, A5 leaflets were produced and placed in key pick-up points throughout the building. The design of marketing assets for Membership was managed by the Board but paid for by The Atkinson's marketing department thanks to an underspend, since they too had been unable to produce print for much of the year.

Board Recruitment and Organisational Development

Following the resignation of two Board Members in 2020/21, the Trust started this financial year with a comprehensive Trustee recruitment drive. In total we received nine applications, with five interviewed online by a panel of Trustees, led by the Chair. Each potential candidate was assessed against the skills matrix devised last year to ensure any new Trustee would help to fill skills gaps and bring the experience needed to create a robust and resilient Board.

Following the interviews, four candidates were invited to attend a Board meeting (online) as observers. Three candidates were subsequently invited to join the Board. All three became Board Members on 12 October 2021. Another candidate was asked to take on a newly created voluntary role of Membership Liaison Manager, which she accepted.

Due to the large number of applicants and the impact of the pandemic, the recruitment process took longer than anticipated and required significant input from the Chair and other Trustees. However, we believe this was time well spent as the new Trustees have brought renewed energy and enthusiasm to the Trust and its future activities.

By the end of the 21/22 financial year, with Covid-19 restrictions beginning to ease, and three new Trustees in place, we began a period of review, discussion and planning. This allowed us the space to reflect on how we work, what we want to achieve, and how we should develop and change to enable this. We are looking forward to seeing the rewards of this in the next financial year, as fundraising and activity plans progress.

Financial Review

Situation at year end

The total incoming resources for the year amounted to £6,726.77.

The total expenditure in the year amounted to £9,400.92.

Cash funds last year end: £38,647.48.

Cash funds this year end: £35,973.33.

Reserves policy

In 2016, the Trustees agreed a policy of holding reserves of unrestricted funds of a minimum of £10,000. The Trust holds reserves in order that it can continue to achieve its objectives should there be a reduction in incoming resources, such as experienced during the pandemic. However, careful management has meant that we haven't had to use any of the reserve.

Reserves in this context mean funds that are freely available for the Trust's general purposes after all commitments have been met.


As at 31 March 2022 the Trust had remaining unrestricted funds (after reserves) of £7,961.65.

At year end The Trust feels that we have managed our residual funds effectively during the pandemic crisis. We have provisions of £18,011.68 in place to cover previously planned activities and have a reserve of £10,000. The remaining £7,961.65 is not a large sum but is expected to grow as activities resume at The Atkinson and online and onsite donations are able to recommence. It is also hoped that Memberships will start to grow as people are once again able to interact with The Atkinson.

Declaration

The Trustees declare that they approve the Trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of The Atkinson Development Trust's Trustees:

Signature:.....

Name: Jo Kay, Chair of The Atkinson Development Trust

Date: 7 September 2022

Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of The Atkinson Development Trust For the year ended 31st March 2022

I report on the accounts of The Atkinson Development Trust ('the charity') for the year ended 31st March 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

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

Independent examiner's statement


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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



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THE ATKINSON DEVELOPMENT TRUST	As at: 31/03/2022		
Income & Expenditure Account			
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
INCOME			
Individual Giving	0.00	0.00	0.00
Membership	1,535.00	0.00	1,535.00
Donations - Restricted	0.00	785.48	785.48
Donations - Unrestricted	4,444.48	0.00	4,444.48
Grants - Restricted	0.00	0.00	0.00
Grants - Unrestricted	0.00	0.00	0.00
Gift Aid	246.50	0.00	246.50
Miscellaneous	(295.00)	0.00	(295.00)
Interest	10.31	0.00	10.31
Total Receipts	5,941.29	785.48	6,726.77
EXPENDITURE			
Projects - Restricted	0.00	4,739.50	4,739.50
Projects - Unrestricted	3,497.27	0.00	3,497.27
Administration Costs	992.84	0.00	992.84
Membership Scheme Costs	171.31	0.00	171.31
Marketing	0.00	0.00	0.00
Charity Donation	0.00	0.00	0.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Payments	4,661.42	4,739.50	9,400.92
Surplus/(Deficit) of Receipts over Payments	1,279.87	(3,954.02)	(2,674.15)
Cash Funds Last Year End	26,576.78	12,070.70	38,647.48
Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year	1,279.87	(3,954.02)	(2,674.15)
Cash Funds This Year End	27,856.65	8,116.68	35,973.33
Outstanding Commitments			
Bridging the Gap	0.00	7,345.70	7,345.70
Speakers	0.00	300.00	300.00
Scarab Belt Restoration	500.00	100.00	600.00
Choir 2021/22	1,232.01	370.98	1,602.99
Free Tickets 2021/22	3,938.50	0.00	3,938.50
Marketing for Membership launch	1,590.21	0.00	1,590.21
Subscription to Matterport 2021	(0.00)	0.00	(0.00)
Subscription to Matterport 2022	134.28	0.00	134.28
Adopt an Object	2,500.00	0.00	2,500.00
Minimum funds to remain in Trust Accounts	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00
Total Commitments	19,895.00	8,116.68	28,011.68
Funds remaining after commitments	7,961.65	0.00	7,961.65
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES			
Cash Funds This Year End			35,973.33
Accruals			
Monetary Assets:			
Coop Current Account			2962.49
Coop Deposit Account			33010.84
			35,973.33
Signed			
Jo Kay, Chair			
Date	9th May 2022		
Diff	Pending Payment		0.00