



Hats Off for Bootsie TAR 2024

**Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Registration no. 1165319.**

www.hatsoffforbootsie.org.uk

11 Raymond Road, Maidenhead SL6 6DF

Report of the Trustees for the year ending 31 December 2024

The Trustees are pleased to present their annual report together with the consolidated financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31 December 2024.

Chair's Report

Hats Off for Bootsie (HOfB) was incorporated as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) on 26th January 2016 under registration no. 1165319.

HOfB's objects are 'to promote and protect the good health of Combat Veterans who are homeless or who are overcoming mental trauma, in particular but not exclusively, by providing them with opportunities to rehabilitate using the arts as a medium.'

Between 01/01/2024 and 31/12/2024 HOfB secured nil income (£1 from bank interest to be precise) and expenditure of £307. As in previous years, the major enabler in 2024 was the provision of pro-bono services, not income.

2024 was a year when our relationship with the University of West London (UWL) flourished and provided two substantial opportunities to veterans. Both of these opportunities were free of charge to HOfB and a number of other veteran organisations.

Nigel had been asked to be on both steering committees in 2023 for UWL's forthcoming provision for veterans (in 2024). The first opportunity was in music lessons: a choice of Electronic Dance Music (EDM) Composition, and song writing / playing in a band.

The second opportunity offered by UWL was for eight veteran arts organisations from the southern half of England to demonstrate their work to one another, and thereby to learn from each other. As much as Nigel's professional music background informed his advice on the music lessons, so his theatre background informed his advice on the art's knowledge sharing event.

HOfB had the opportunity of presenting three of the most telling scenes from *The Terminus*. The actors not only rehearsed in detail before they reached the theatre, but had the chance to work with professional stage crew in a theatre with lighting and sound effects. The music was played by a fine professional pianist, and on an excellent Steinway Grand Piano.

The performance was inspiring for both audience and performers alike. May I thank all those at UWL who made the event of July 10th such a memorable one: those in administration, those who worked in the theatre, and for Cathy Sloane's vision and determination to make the event happen.

The pilot music sessions in the summer of 2024 had a brilliant outcome the following year. There were ten week courses in both EDM composition and in Playing in a Band. The ten week in-house courses were followed by eight week online courses.

Before the in-house courses started, several veterans were selected and trained to be mentors to the veterans, not least to interface between UWL staff and the veterans on the courses. Out of the four chosen, two were from HOfB: Shaun Johnson and Dean Helliwell.

Our gratitude goes to Greg Smith, Lecturer in Music Technology, whose initial warm welcome and persistent patience were significant factors in the programme of music lessons offered to veterans.

May I thank Supporters and Friends, as well as Trustees and Ambassadors for the generous help they have given us this year. Most of our enablement was made possible by pro-bono work undertaken by them in support of our aims and activities.

Lucinda Howland
Chair

Governance

During 2024, our board consisted of five Trustees. The Trustees have a variety of backgrounds and experience pertinent to both our proposed activities and the high standards of governance of a CIO. HOfB's decisions are reached either through a majority vote at Trustees' Meetings or, as our constitution allows, through a majority vote online. The Trustees met twice in 2024.

Objectives and Activities

HOfB's objects are 'to promote and protect the good health of Combat Veterans who are homeless or who are overcoming mental trauma, in particular but not exclusively, by providing them with opportunities to rehabilitate using the arts as a medium.'

HOfB was established on 26 January 2016. During 2024, the initial objectives continued to be developed and pursued:

1. Establishing a plan of activities to support the longer term objective of putting on a theatrical production using military veteran actors.
2. Developing the relationships required to deliver item 1
3. Developing relationships, including our network of volunteer ambassadors, to promote a positive perception of veterans overcoming mental trauma and homelessness
4. Raising grants or other sizeable funding to deliver item 1.

Achievement and Performance

Objective 1

A costed plan previously developed continues to apply. The plan is to stage a play, *The Terminus*, which has as its central character a homeless war veteran suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and the onset of Alzheimer's Disease.

The cast and crew will consist mostly or entirely of former servicemen and women. Objective 1 is the main plank of HOfB's strategy to achieving its charitable objects. For more details, specifically how this will be delivered and who will be involved, see Objective 2.

HOfB finished its short film, *Service No Longer Required (SNLR)*. The film raises issues facing veterans overcoming mental trauma and homelessness, particularly issues concerning their value to society. A more positive public perception of such veterans will not just be for those involved in the project, but also for thousands of others with similar challenges.

Objective 2

HOfB continues to develop significant relationships which enable us to give veterans quality training, experience and performance activities. In 2024, despite a negligible income of £1, we were busier than ever. (Please see Chair's Report on pages 2 and 3, which describes the opportunities given to us by UWL, which were entirely pro bono. Developing these relationships is essential for us to remain useful and effective.

Objective 3

HOfB's wider network of volunteer ambassadors continues to be valued. HOfB is most grateful for their enthusiasm and dedication to impact their own home and work communities – mainly by conversations and social media, but also speaking to small, local groups.

Despite Covid, when numbers of ambassadors fell away due to the lack of opportunity to talk to people, it now appears that the reach, effectiveness and enthusiasm of our volunteer ambassadors is more than it was pre-Covid.

Objective 4

A major dependency for achieving Objective 1 was and continues to be the ability to raise the necessary funding. The Veterans' Foundation's initial grant made our short film, SNLR possible. We will be approaching them again.

The Trustees had previously made two decisions that have a strong bearing on the fundraising activities:

- 1 Not to pursue actively funding from the public in general until such time that a sufficiently large grant/donation had been secured to give a realistic prospect of achieving Objective 1.
- 2 Until such time that a grant/corporate donation had been secured to cover a high proportion of the cost of Objective 1, no commercial commitments would be made. The box office revenues would largely be discounted from the funds required for Objective 1.

The impact of these decisions was that a 'high entry bar to start' was created. Whilst the grant from The Veterans' Foundation covered most of the costs of producing *Service No Longer Required* the above ethos still applies and therefore a funded step-by-step approach will continue to be adopted.

A variation of Objective 1 will be discussed among the Trustees and those with practical experience and advice. Instead of a fully staged run of performances, the idea of producing a radio play with a professional podcast has been muted. The same criteria of employing a cast and crew of mostly or entirely former servicemen and women would apply. The level of artistic achievement and opportunity to develop the cast as artists is comparable.

The great advantages are the budget for a radio recording would be a fraction of that required for a staged production, and that we are more likely to raise the money for a fully staged run, if we had a high quality sound recording that was, in effect' publicising our original objective far and wide.

Unfortunately, UWL are not in a position to help us either with a financial contribution, or to use their facilities for rehearsing or recording. We have approached a well-known actor who is a most experienced Radio Four Play performer, and a drama trained writer who we are hoping will fundraise for us.

Crowd funding, something we have yet to try, comes highly recommended by our web designer, Adrian Scarbrough MA MSc. He has considerable experience of this method of raising funds. His experience gives him confidence that we would raise the money for a radio play, but not for a fully staged play.

Financial Review

2024 saw a total income of £1, and a total expenditure of £307. HOfB continues to be volunteer led and therefore carries minimal overheads.

The pro-bono work we receive, such as legal advice, research work and the improving, hosting and maintaining of our website www.hatsoffforbootsie.org.uk the work of our wider network of ambassadors has gone ahead unhindered by budgetary constraints.

Trustees and Friends of HOfB have continued to abide generously to HOfB's principle that, at all times, any expenses incurred should be borne by the individuals themselves. Nigel, our Creative Director, made in excess of 35 journeys to London in 2024: UWL in W5, Stoll in W6 and to the pianist's rehearsal in London E10, as well as rehearsing as far afield as Plymouth. For this and other such expenditure, nothing was withdrawn from our account.

The Trustees continue to be of the opinion that a major source of funding is required in order for its activities to accelerate, but consider the grant funding secured at the end of 2020, the filming in 2021 and release of the film in our launch at EY, May 2023, to be good progress.

Given the 'start-up' circumstances of HOfB (and decision 2 under Objective 4) the Trustees have not felt the need for a reserves policy at this time.

Outlook

It should also be noted that the pro-bono generosity of individuals and organisations reduces the sum we need to raise for projects by a considerable amount. For example, SNLR would cost between £20K to £25K, were it not for pro-bono contributions. Stoll contributed rehearsal space in the Community Hall and unlimited access to film on their property. A number of individuals waived their fees entirely, some reduced their fees to a bare minimum. So, a grant of under £5K proved sufficient to make a film which would otherwise have cost 4 or 5 times that amount .

Should the Trustees decide to produce a radio play and professional podcast, paid for principally by crowdfunding (see last three paragraphs of Objective 4 on page 6), the outlook will, necessarily change, and change for the better.

Public Benefit Statement

The Trustees believe the benefits of HOfB's activities are:

- First, for both ex-servicemen and women, who have suffered mental trauma or experienced homelessness as a result of their service to their country, and who wish to engage with the performing arts to assist in their rehabilitation, for engagement with the wider community, to provide professional opportunities to those who have retrained in film and theatre. It would be a profound mistake not to include those with good mental health whose involvement will enable them to keep it so.
- To the wider community, initially family and friends of such veterans, but also the public in general benefiting from the knowledge that veterans who have served their country are being supported in their rehabilitation in an engaging, appropriate way ;
- The veterans themselves are combatting the stigma surrounding mental trauma and homelessness, not only in military circles, but also where it exists in the public at large. Their efforts and ours help to create a climate of two-way approachability, which is often the starting point for veterans suffering with mental trauma and homelessness to receive help and support.

Reference and administrative details

Charity number: 1165319
Principal Office: The Summit, 2 Castle Hill Terrace, Maidenhead, SL6 4JP
Web site: www.hatsoffforbootsie.org.uk

Our advisers

Auditors N/A
Bankers CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4JQ
Legal Advice Ashleigh Harding

Trustees

The Trustees serving during the year and since the year-end were as follows:

Lucinda Howland, Robin Vickers, Rachael Odeniyi, Ishmael Carboo and Nigel Fair

Structure, Governance and Management

During 2024, our board consisted of five Trustees. The Trustees have a variety of backgrounds and experience pertinent to both our proposed activities and high standards of governance of a CIO. HOfB's decisions are reached either through a majority vote at Trustees' Meetings or, as our constitution allows, through a majority vote online. The Trustees met twice in 2024.

Lara Fair attended a Trustees' Meetings once in 2024. (She was 18 for most of 2024). Her involvement is part of our awareness that in order to be equipped for the future, one must prepare in the present.

Governing Document

HOfB is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation governed by its Constitution of 17 December 2015. It is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission.

Approved by the Trustees of HOfB on October 2025 and signed on their behalf by Lucinda Howland (Chair)



Hats Off For Bootsie

Financial Statements for the year ended 31st December 2024

	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£
Income and Expenditure Statement		
Income	1	1,001
Expenditure	307	355
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Excess of Income over Expenditure	(307)	(354)
Opening balance 1 st January	615	968
Closing balance 31 st December	309	614
Assets and Liabilities Statement		
Total assets	309	614
Total liabilities	0	0

Approved by the Trustees of HOfB on 26th October 2025 and signed on their behalf by Lucinda Howland (chair)



HOfB Accounts y / e 31/12/24

Date	Credit	Debit	Balance
01/01/2024 Opening Balance			£614.86
15/01/2024 Bank charges		£5.00	£609.86
15/02/2024 Bank charges		£5.00	£604.86
15/03/2024 Bank charges		£5.00	£599.86
26/03/2024 Bank interest	£0.31		£600.17
15/04/2024 Bank charges		£5.00	£595.17
15/05/2024 Bank charges		£5.00	£590.17
17/06/2024 Bank charges		£5.00	£585.17
26/06/2024 Bank interest	£0.31		£585.48
15/07/2024 Bank charges		£5.00	£580.48
15/08/2024 Bank charges		£5.00	£575.48
16/09/2024 Bank charges		£5.00	£570.48
26/09/2024 Bank interest	£0.29		£570.77
15/10/2024 Bank charges		£5.00	£565.77
24/10/2024 Enthuse Annual Payment		£246.95	£318.82
15/11/2024 Bank charges		£5.00	£313.82
16/12/2024 Bank charges		£5.00	£308.82
27/12/2024 Bank interest	£0.20		£309.02 correct to here
Totals	1.11	306.95	
Net for yr		-305.84	