

# **APPLAUSE RURAL TOURING**

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**Charity number 1165632**



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# **Applause Rural Touring**

## **Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023**



The trustees are pleased to present their report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the charity's constitution, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

### **REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATION DETAILS**

Charity registration number: 1165632

Principal address: Southborough Civic Centre, 137 London Road, Southborough,  
Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 0NA

Director: Dawn Badland

Bankers: CAF Bank Limited, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling,  
Kent, ME19 4JQ

### **STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

The charity is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) governed by its constitution dated 27 January 2016. The charity was registered with the Charity Commission on 16 February 2016.

The charity is governed by the board of trustees. The board meets quarterly (and more often if required) and decides on the strategic direction the charity should take, the performance targets that should be set and examines the recent activities and performance of the charity. The day to day operations of the charity are delegated to the Director.

#### **Recruitment & appointment of trustees**

Trustees are recruited in conjunction with ongoing needs and skills analysis to provide balanced and informed Governance for the Charity. No more than 12 and no less than 3 persons may be elected. Appointments are agreed by the Trustees for a fixed term after which Trustees may be re-elected.

#### **Risk management**

The Trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error. The Trustees meet on a quarterly basis and assess any risks to the Charity including monitoring of the Risk Register the content of which is informed by consultation with staff, Board and stakeholders.

# Applause Rural Touring

## Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023



### Trustees

The trustees who served during the year and to the date of this report were:

Nigel Bolton  
Rachel Daly (resigned 14 March 2023)  
Hannah Deeble  
Julie Flower (resigned 13 September 2022)  
Helen Graves (resigned 12 September 2023)  
Daniel King  
Louise Knight  
Elizabeth Newall (appointed 12 September 2023)  
Elizabeth Pencavel (appointed 12 September 2023)  
Kat Portman Smith

### OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The object of Applause Rural Touring as set out in its constitution is:

The advancement of arts to the benefit of the general public in rural and/or isolated communities in the South East of England by, in particular but not exclusively, programming, commissioning and facilitating delivery of artistic experiences; working with artists to help develop their understanding of, and work for, these communities; and by extending the reach of arts provision by developing local venues and supporting and training volunteer organisers. Isolated in this context means isolated from arts provision by physical, social or economic reasons.

#### Public benefit

The trustees have complied with the duty in section 4 of the 2011 Charities Act to have due regard to guidance published by the Charity Commission, including public benefit guidance. We have referred to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities.

The charity furthers its charitable purposes for the public benefit by: opening up artistic opportunities to rural communities in Kent and Sussex and working with high quality cultural practitioners to develop and champion their work in rural areas.

### ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Our work creates opportunities for rural and culturally under-served neighbourhoods to be empowered to reimagine their community through creative engagement. From halls to pubs to libraries, from fetes and festivals to village greens and to wide open spaces. We connect exceptional artists and performers with a network of passionate volunteers and programmers. Our work with artists and performers helps connect the dots to tour performance as well as develop new creations that empower people to reimagine where they live.

Communities are at the heart of everything we do and being far flung from a building for culture shouldn't be a barrier to experiencing it. Our work offers the opportunity to bring people together for inspiring, shared experiences celebrating the positive impacts culture has for a community. Through our touring programmes we reach over 140 communities, 35,000 audience members and more than 500 volunteers for culture each year.



# **Applause Rural Touring**

## **Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2023**



We operate 3 key delivery routes, these are – to support and create excellent artistic and creative opportunity. To increase participation & engagement opportunities for rural communities and to create a rural touring model which is resilient and sustainable.

### **Increase participation & engagement opportunities for rural communities**

Our delivery in 2022-23 saw the end of our Arts Council England NPO phase which was extended to 5 years due to the COVID pandemic. In this final year of NPO delivery 224 events were programmed through Indoor, Outdoor and Inn Crowd strands of work. Our outdoor touring programme continued to grow and we gradually were able to begin touring indoor seasons building back community promoting groups.

Replay, a discrete project supporting young people to attend school took place in partnership with Fabulous Projects.

Planning began for the next phase of our NPO arrangement with Arts Council England, having been granted a large uplift from April 2023 to both extend our work into Essex and to deliver specific programmes of work within areas of Levelling Up. Our 3-year planning focussed on developing a 3-year strategy to increase diversity amongst both the artistic companies supported by Applause and the range of communities we work with.

### **Support and create excellent artistic and creative opportunity**

We held an artists' Lab in partnership with Queens Theatre Hornchurch to support diverse companies to access our commissioning opportunities.

We continued a programme of commissions for our outdoor touring programme. The following companies were supported to make work for 2023 touring. Disabled led company Darly & Co creating Classic Connee, Dubious Dolphins by Frank Wurzinger, The Woolly Mammoth by Enter Edem and Laika the Space dog by Lori Hopkins.

The Allotment Project by Casson & Friends and Mughal Miniatures Walkabout by Sonia Sabri Company were co-commissioned with through a partnership with Creative Estuary which sought to reach diverse artists and artists working in collaboration with communities.

### **Create a rural touring model which is resilient and sustainable**

Applause is in an excellent position having developed a new 3-year plan and secured further investment from ACE. Our work has a clear direction and our ambitions are well articulated to a range of stakeholders. We expect that the coming years will be challenging and expect there will be pressures on funding sources. However, we are in a strong position to deliver our ambitions with a growing network of partnerships in progress.

## **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

The income of the charity amounted to £294,159 (2022: £287,708) with expenditure of £445,214 (2022: £381,423). A large proportion of the excess expenditure over income was due to upfront project funding grant payments received in previous financial years. The remainder forms part of our business investment plan to extend the network and develop long term community co-creation activity.

### **Reserves policy**

The policy of the charity as at 31 March 2023 was to have free reserves of five months' operating costs to fund its work (currently budgeted at £87,015). Unrestricted reserves at 31 March 2023 were £246,184 (2022: £260,251) of which £87,015 (2022: £nil) was designated during the year by the trustees to set aside the free reserves of five months' operating costs with a further £88,039 (2022: £nil) designated for development of activity in Essex and driving a new outdoor touring model for future inclusivity and sustainability. As at 31 March 2023 the assets of the charity are considered adequate to fulfil its obligations and the trustees consider the state of our financial affairs to be satisfactory.

## **PLANS FOR THE FUTURE**

Our move of location to the Southborough Civic Centre in April 2023 will benefit the organisation greatly and make a real difference to the working environment for a growing staff team. The new space is also vastly more environmentally friendly and also allows us the opportunity to work with the Town Council to develop a programme of work for the community space on site.

Over the next 4 years we will focus on developing our work both through our extension into Essex and through a Community Co-Creation programme, supporting community volunteers and artists to work together forging shared cultural ambition and creative leadership. We will continue to develop and diversify our board of Trustees, workforce and our partnerships. The Inn Crowd Pubs + project will wrap up for the time being with the option of developing legacy delivery once partners have been fully consulted.

## TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The charity trustees are responsible for preparing a trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, of the charity for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

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

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the applicable Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations, and the provisions of the constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity's website in accordance with legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements.

Approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by



Kat Portman Smith  
Trustee  
12 December 2023

# Applause Rural Touring

## Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2023



	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £
Note						
<b>INCOME:</b>						
Grants and donations	196,320	-	<b>196,320</b>	207,473	13,559	221,032
Touring programme income	80,127	16,740	<b>96,867</b>	57,474	8,075	65,549
Bank interest	972	-	<b>972</b>	1,127	-	1,127
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>277,419</b>	<b>16,740</b>	<b>294,159</b>	<b>266,074</b>	<b>21,634</b>	<b>287,708</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE:</b>						
Touring programme artists' fees	113,915	36,782	<b>150,697</b>	81,284	29,950	111,234
Artist development	30,670	24,022	<b>54,692</b>	21,150	18,349	39,499
Audience development & marketing	7,184	28,067	<b>35,251</b>	15,095	19,893	34,988
Staff training & development	3,444	56	<b>3,500</b>	2,150	1,000	3,150
Fundraising costs	-	-	<b>-</b>	177	-	177
Professional fees	3,170	-	<b>3,170</b>	720	-	720
Salaries & freelance staff costs	142,866	32,606	<b>175,472</b>	131,105	39,799	170,904
Travel costs	1,809	1,174	<b>2,983</b>	656	2,824	3,480
Premises costs	16,965	2,484	<b>19,449</b>	14,922	2,349	17,271
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>320,023</b>	<b>125,191</b>	<b>445,214</b>	<b>267,259</b>	<b>114,164</b>	<b>381,423</b>
<b>NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>(42,604)</b>	<b>(108,451)</b>	<b>(151,055)</b>	<b>(1,185)</b>	<b>(92,530)</b>	<b>(93,715)</b>
Transfers between funds	28,537	(28,537)	<b>-</b>	32,654	(32,654)	<b>-</b>
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>	<b>(14,067)</b>	<b>(136,988)</b>	<b>(151,055)</b>	<b>31,469</b>	<b>(125,184)</b>	<b>(93,715)</b>
TOTAL FUNDS AT 1 APRIL 2022	260,251	160,310	420,561	228,782	285,494	514,276
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AT 31 MARCH 2023</b>	<b>246,184</b>	<b>23,322</b>	<b>269,506</b>	<b>260,251</b>	<b>160,310</b>	<b>420,561</b>

The notes on pages 10 to 14 form part of these financial statements.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.



**Applause Rural Touring**  
Balance Sheet at 31 March 2023



	Note	£	2023 £	£	2022 £
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
Debtors	5	12,723		13,175	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>289,122</u>		<u>433,241</u>	
		301,845		446,416	
<b>LIABILITIES</b>					
<b>CREDITORS:</b> amounts falling due within one year	6	<u>(32,339)</u>		<u>(25,855)</u>	
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>			<u>269,506</u>		<u>420,561</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>			<u>269,506</u>		<u>420,561</u>
<b>FUNDS OF THE CHARITY</b>					
Restricted funds	8		23,322		160,310
Unrestricted funds	9				
General		71,130		260,251	
Designated		<u>175,054</u>		-	
			<u>246,184</u>		<u>260,251</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>			<u>269,506</u>		<u>420,561</u>

Signed on behalf of the trustees

Kat Portman Smith  
Trustee  
12 December 2023

**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**a) Accounting Basis**

*i) Basis of preparation*

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011. Applause Rural Touring meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

*ii) Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis*

It is the trustees' view that there are no material uncertainties regarding Applause Rural Touring's ability to continue in business for the foreseeable future taking into account all available information, and have neither the intention nor the need to liquidate or curtail materially the scale of its operations, and have prepared the accounts on that assumption. The trustees have reviewed the charity's financial position for the coming year and are satisfied that the charity will have sufficient funds, largely due to the continued investment from Arts Council England and our main Local Authority contributors from whom grant funding is largely received in advance.

**b) Fund Accounting**

- Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.
- Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose.
- Restricted Funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor or grant award or through the terms of an appeal.

**c) Income**

All income is included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. Income from fees received for future events are recognised as income in the accounting period in which the event takes place.

**d) Expenditure**

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. It is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates.

**e) Debtors**

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

**1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)**

**f) Cash At Bank And In Hand**

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

**g) Creditors**

Creditors are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

**h) Contributions to pension funds**

The charity makes available to all employees a defined contribution pension scheme operated by NEST. The pension costs charged to the Statement of Financial Activities represent the amount of the contributions payable to the scheme in respect of the accounting period.

**i) Operating Leases**

Rentals under operating leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor have been charged to the profit and loss account as incurred.

**j) Cash Flow Statement**

The charity has taken advantage of the exemption from preparing a cash flow statement in accordance with FRS 102 on the basis that it qualifies as a small entity.

**k) Corporation tax**

Applause Rural Touring is a registered charity and as such its income and gains falling within Sections 471 to 489 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 are exempt from corporation tax to the extent that they are applied to its charitable objectives.

**2. NET EXPENDITURE**

Net expenditure is stated after charging:

	2023 £	2022 £
Rent payable under operating lease:		
- Property	4,071	4,071
- Equipment	1,586	2,030
Independent Examiner's fee	720	720

### 3. STAFF COSTS AND NUMBERS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Wages and Salaries	143,654	136,751
Social Security Costs	8,939	7,644
Pension Costs	3,153	2,974
	155,746	147,369

The average number of staff employed during the year was 5 (2022: 6). There were no employees with emoluments exceeding £60,000 per annum during the year.

Employee benefits totalled £41,688 (2022: £34,421) for the key management personnel of the charity.

### 4. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

During the year a total of £nil (2022: £nil) was paid to no (2022: none) trustee for reimbursement of travel expenses.

### 5. DEBTORS

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade Debtors	11,445	11,850
Prepayments	1,278	1,325
	12,723	13,175

### 6. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade Creditors	14,743	12,499
Other Taxes and Social Security	3,031	3,099
Accruals and Deferred Income	13,978	9,663
Pension Contributions	587	594
	32,339	25,855

Included in creditors above is deferred income relating to income received in advance for events to be held in the following financial year as follows:-

	£	£
Brought forward at 1 April 2022	-	-
Receipts in the year deferred – events in 2023/24	1,650	-
At 31 March 2023	1,650	-



## 7. FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

Future minimum rentals payable under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Within one year	-	1,861
Within two to five years	3,235	-
	3,235	1,861

## 8. RESTRICTED FUNDS

	At 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	At 31 March 2023
		£	£	£	£
Rother District Council	388	-	-	-	388
Inn Crowd Pubs+	159,922	16,740	(125,191)	(28,537)	22,934
	<b>160,310</b>	<b>16,740</b>	<b>(125,191)</b>	<b>(28,537)</b>	<b>23,322</b>

	At 1 April 2021	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	At 31 March 2022
		£	£	£	£
Rother District Council	388	-	-	-	388
Inn Crowd Pubs+	285,106	21,634	(114,164)	(32,654)	159,922
	<b>285,494</b>	<b>21,634</b>	<b>(114,164)</b>	<b>(32,654)</b>	<b>160,310</b>

Restricted funds consist of funds given by a donor to be spent on specific projects.

Transfers between funds represent:

Inn Crowd Pubs+ - contribution from project to unrestricted funds towards staff costs & overheads in line with the original agreed project budget approved by the funder.

**Applause Rural Touring**  
Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023



**9. UNRESTRICTED FUNDS**

	<b>At 1 April 2022</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>At 31 March 2023</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
General funds	260,251	277,419	(320,023)	(146,517)	71,130
Designated fund – 5 month reserve	-	-	-	87,015	87,015
Designated fund – Essex/outdoors	-	-	-	88,039	88,039
	<b>260,251</b>	<b>277,419</b>	<b>(320,023)</b>	<b>28,537</b>	<b>246,184</b>

	<b>At 1 April 2021</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>At 31 March 2022</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<i>General funds</i>	<i>228,782</i>	<i>266,074</i>	<i>(267,259)</i>	<i>32,654</i>	<i>260,251</i>

Transfers between funds represent:

Contribution from Inn Crowd Pubs+ project to unrestricted general funds towards staff costs & overheads in line with the original agreed project budget approved by the funder.

Transfer from general funds to designated fund to set aside the free reserves of five months' operating costs.

**10. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

There were no related party transactions during the year (2022: none).

**Independent Examiner's Report  
to the Trustees of Applause Rural Touring  
for the year ended 31 March 2023**

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023, which are set out on pages 8 to 14.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust 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 Trustee'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 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 Association of International Accountants, which is one of the listed bodies.

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 Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- (2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- (3) the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 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.

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.



Paul Baker FAIA

Applied Accountancy Limited  
50a Clifford Way  
Maidstone  
Kent ME16 8GD

Dated: 12 December 2023