

Chair's report to the Charity Commission on the 2022 Wirksworth Arts Festival

The Festival consists of 3 main parts: the Trail Weekend, the Artist in Residence/central exhibition, and events run in partnership with a range of other local groups and organisations.

1. The Trail Weekend is always the focal point of the Festival, and the event on which we survive or fall. We had worried beforehand that, post pandemic, a. venues would be reluctant to let visitors into their homes; b. artists wouldn't apply; c. visitors wouldn't come. We were proved wrong on every account. We had a good number of venues, plenty of artists applying and we estimate 4000 people at the Trail. We sold 3000 wristbands, and there were children and others with free wristbands. We were pleased to offer free wristbands to refugee families and carers.

Setting up was extremely hard work, and we wouldn't have done it without all our wonderful volunteers, and full-time input from some trustees. Just as we were all set to go, we had the news that the Queen had died on the Friday before the Festival opening on the Saturday. This made things extremely problematic – firstly we had to decide whether to go ahead; then we thought the Town Council might not be able to give us use of the Hall, then we had to negotiate our space in the church alongside the need for a space for quiet contemplation. It took until midday Friday to get this sorted, but we finally agreed to go ahead as planned, with minor amendments to the programme. The Trail Weekend was a fantastic success. We had masses of feedback in person, via email afterwards, phone calls and on social media. Feedback was about the quality of the art, the amount artists sold (almost every artist sold, and some sold quite a bit) and the ambiance in the town. Artists were bubbling over with enthusiasm about being able to talk to people, meet people, discuss their art, and talk to each other.

2. The Central Exhibition - this was the exhibition set up by our Artist in Residence from 2021, Liane Laing. This was a real hit, with many comments about it being the best for many years. Certainly, the artist, Liane, was a perfectionist, and demanded a lot of our time, energy, and funding to put the exhibition on. Liane has grown immensely over the period of her residency, and the way her work has developed is very much to do with the time she spent here, how she used her time, and how she developed her work. Hence three pieces exhibited in the RA Summer Show and sold there.

3. Partnership events - The Performance Programme is run in partnership with Town Hall Events – it was a very successful and varied programme, with all but one performance making a profit; performers included Too Darn Soulful, The Amalgam and New Perspectives Theatre Company. The Tunnel Project - the Festival was pleased to be supporting artist Rhys Taylor of Harpo Arts, a respected Street artist who will produce a lasting artwork for the town and has been engaging people of all ages in Wirksworth in discussions about the Tarmac owned steel tunnel which is on a public footpath. This won't be finished until the end of 2023.

The screening of Fantasia on the Friday night was a great success, despite a bit of rain, and we were so pleased to have been able to support a BSL signer to support the audience. Our long-term partner Gig On The Roof provided a Sunday night concert featuring local bands. This is an important event for bringing in younger people to both perform and to listen and also engages a large and varied selection of local people. The MusicWirks team delivered the pop-up music for the 2022 Festival, in 3 venues, two of them outside, all weekend. We had choirs performing, The Nottingham Wind Ensemble, and the opening of a new gallery in the old bank.

Managing, funding and delivering the Wirksworth Festival 2022.

We held our AGM in February 2022. The trustees were still operating with 11 trustees rather than the 13 which would make a full complement, and we are planning ways in which younger people might offer to come onto the board. We had a temporary manager in 2022, and at the end of 2022, after the Festival, we were delighted to appoint a permanent manager who began in April 2023. We moved offices to a much smaller and cheaper place and took out some permanent storage for all our equipment.

The 2022 Artist in Residence, Jemma Gunning, was appointed in April 2022, and began her 3-month residency in July. Her work will be exhibited in the 2023 Festival. She has been particularly interested in local quarries and empty industrial buildings.

As can be seen from the attached accounts, almost all of our income comes from the Trail Weekend: wristbands+artists' fees+catering. We also have some local sponsorship, and a generous donation from The Ampersand Foundation which sponsors our Artist in Residence programme. We could not manage without the in kind funding offered by the Wirksworth own Council (free letting for 2 weeks) plus its sponsorship.

Carol Taylor, Chair of the Wirksworth Festival

Wirksworth Festival	
Balance Sheet	
As of January 31, 2023	
	Total
Fixed Asset	
Total Fixed Asset	
Cash at bank and in hand	
BB ELECTRONIC TRF	0.00
BUS BANK INSTANT	0.00
Client trust account	0.00
Leek B/S Savings a/c	10,171.02
Lloyds a/c - WAF T/As WF	17,131.51
Paypal	424.54
Petty Cash	83.20
Total Cash at bank and in hand	£ 27,810.27
Debtors	
Debtors	0.00
Total Debtors	£ 0.00
Net current assets	£ 27,810.27
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	
Current Liabilities	
Client Trust Accounts - Liabilities	0.00
Total Current Liabilities	£ 0.00
Total Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	£ 0.00
Net current assets (liabilities)	£ 27,810.27
Total assets less current liabilities	£ 27,810.27
Total net assets (liabilities)	£ 27,810.27
Charity funds	
Opening Balance Equity	19,307.17
Retained Earnings	11,234.27
Surplus/(Deficit)	-2,731.17
Total Charity funds	£ 27,810.27
Approved by independent examiner	
Signed <i>R. Beard</i>	
Dated 20.11.23	

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
WIRKSWORTH FESTIVAL

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Wirksworth Festival (the trust) for the year ended 31st January 2023.

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 Trust'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 Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. The accounts do not accord with these 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.

Signed:



Robert Baird

Independent Examiner

The Manor House, St Mary's Gate, Wirksworth. DE4 4DQ

24th November 2023