

Company no. 6004929
Charity no. 1176855

Diverse City
Report and Unaudited Financial
Statements
31 March 2025

Diverse City

Reference and administrative details

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Company number	6004929																						
Charity number	1176855																						
Registered office and operational address	3 Manwell Drive Swanage Dorset BH19 2RB																						
Trustees	<p>Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:</p> <table><tr><td>Beryl Richards (Chair)</td><td>(appointed 17 October 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Ayad Al-Ani</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Naomi Baldwin Webb</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Juliette Burton</td><td>(appointed 26 March 2025)</td></tr><tr><td>Sophie Cottle</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Emma Hughes</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Valentina Huxley</td><td>(resigned 15 April 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Ben Johnsen</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Judeline Nicholas</td><td>(appointed 23 September 2024)</td></tr><tr><td>Sara Rhodes</td><td>(appointed 20 January 2025)</td></tr><tr><td>Joshua Ward</td><td></td></tr></table>	Beryl Richards (Chair)	(appointed 17 October 2024)	Ayad Al-Ani		Naomi Baldwin Webb		Juliette Burton	(appointed 26 March 2025)	Sophie Cottle		Emma Hughes		Valentina Huxley	(resigned 15 April 2024)	Ben Johnsen		Judeline Nicholas	(appointed 23 September 2024)	Sara Rhodes	(appointed 20 January 2025)	Joshua Ward	
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Ben Johnsen																							
Judeline Nicholas	(appointed 23 September 2024)																						
Sara Rhodes	(appointed 20 January 2025)																						
Joshua Ward																							
Bankers	Unity Trust Bank PO Box 7193 Planetary Road Willenhall WV1 9DG																						
Independent examiners	Godfrey Wilson Limited Chartered accountants and statutory auditors 5th Floor Mariner House 62 Prince Street Bristol BS1 4QD																						

Diverse City

Co-Chair Report

For the year ended 31 March 2025

This has been a year of renewal and resilience for Diverse City as we make the New Now of our imaginations. In 2024–25 we built on our reputation as national leaders in inclusive performance, touring reimagined co-productions, investing in new work, exploring new partnerships and extending our reach internationally.

There is much uncertainty across the Arts sector and beyond. Our current phase of planning and renewal is about ensuring Diverse City is in as strong a position as possible to face these challenges with clarity and resilience.

We faced the same financial pressures as the wider cultural sector: rising costs, squeezed touring budgets, and uncertainty about long-term public investment. Yet our team, artists, and partners responded with creativity, care, and determination.

Highlights included the successful reworking and national tour of *Mid Life*, which brought audiences to their feet (literally!) across the country and reminded us of the power of representation and allyship. We deepened our artistic collaborations — from conversations around *All We Have* in Plymouth, to nurturing young disabled musicians in *The Other Life I Lead*, to forging international connections through *Earth, Wheels, Air* with Pamoja Dance Kenya.

We also invested in the next generation: From SEN school workshops to weekly circus training, disabled and diverse young people were not only participants, but emerging leaders. As one artist put it:

"We're not just participants anymore – we're leaders, showing the next generation what's possible."

This year has reinforced our conviction that diversity in the performing arts is not an optional extra — it is essential to creating work that reflects and speaks to our society. We thank our funders, partners, and above all the artists and audiences who continue to shape this journey with us.



Judeline Nicholas
Co Chairs



Beryl Richards

Diverse City

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities (effective from January 2019).

Structure, governance and management

Diverse City is a company limited by guarantee and a charity registered with the Charity Commission. In 2024-25 11 people served on the board of trustees and the charity is governed by our Articles of Association, adopted by a special resolution dated 22 December 2017.

The Board recruits trustees in collaboration with the Executive Team through trustee development programmes and specialist agencies, by invitation and open call out. Trustees are appointed according to identified skill gaps and in line with targets around representation and equality. Trustees meet at least four times a year online to review quarterly progress against targets, updated risk register and management accounts and meet once at an annual, in person awayday to review strategic plans and activity.

The charity was strengthened through increased access support for the board of trustees, and, working with CounterCulture, the recruitment of Co-Chairs Judeline Nicholas and Beryl Richards, plus two new trustees, Sara Rhodes and Juliette Burton. All brought new expertise, energy and insights. At the end of 2023-24 our longstanding trustee and youth theatre alumnus, Dave Young came to the end of his final term of office and Valentina Huxley stepped down for personal reasons at the start of 2024-25. The demographic breakdown of Diverse City board at the end of 2024-25 was as follows: 30% of our board are D/deaf, disabled, or living with a long-term health condition; 30% are from the global majority; 20% are LGBTQ+; 40% are young people between ages of 20-34; 40% are neurodivergent; 70% identify as women; and 30% are from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Our brilliant Governance and Compliance Manager Becky Hughes played a critical role throughout the year in inducting trustees into the company, ensuring close communication between Co chairs and Executive Team and holding the weight of Governance administration and operations. Individual Trustees took responsibility for oversight of the company's compliance with Arts Council England's investment principles; they formed task and finish groups for specific work or joined action groups to oversee discrete areas of management. Trustees were invited to view work in development and the company in action throughout the year.

Responsibility for the management of the charity is delegated to a four-person Joint Chief Executive Team, comprised of two Joint Artistic Directors, an Executive Director and a Finance Director who all report to the board. The Joint Chief Executive Team holds responsibility for strategic artistic, financial and organisational delivery of the three-year business plan. Financial management is led by the Executive Director and Finance Director.

Diverse City

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Diverse City artistic leadership is held by Joint Artistic Directors, Claire Hodgson and Jamie Beddard. Delivery of Diverse City's strategic circus collaboration, Extraordinary Bodies, is shared equally between the charity and Cirque Bijou Limited. The collaboration emerged out of our work together in 2012 Olympics and is governed by an agreement, reviewed annually.

In 2024-25, Diverse City employed a distributed core team of 15 people, (largely on part-time contracts). We do not have a permanent volunteer staff. This year our workforce increased by 54 freelance and contractual professional performers, creative practitioners and producers. Our core and freelance workforce together represent 35% of D/deaf or disabled people, or people living with a long-term condition; 17% from the global majority; 48% LGBTQ+ people; 29% neurodivergent people; 68% women; 32% young people aged between 20-34; and 9% identify as being from lower socio economic backgrounds.

Strategic areas of activity are overseen by the Joint Chief Executive Team. Responsibility for relationship management, and tactical planning is delegated to project producers, managers and creatives (in house and freelance). Project, operations and marketing teams are supported by peers and stewarded by the Executive Team. We do not have a physical office and operate through a shared online platform, alongside meeting face to face at regular co-working days.

The charity is active in many new and established networks and continues to have an important strategic role across the sector: We are part of the What Next? Leadership Group, we contributed to DCMS Roundtables (including the Arts Council Review, and Access to Work consultations), we are connected to artist and organisation networks through Unlimited, Change Creation, the NPO cohort, Jerwood Creative Fellowships, Fuel Basecamp Producing and Touring companies, plus festival, touring and commercial networks. Jamie Beddard and Claire Hodgson work closely with the Clore Leadership Programme and have been part of the Agents for Change network working at Theatre Royal Plymouth, Bristol Old Vic and New Wolsey, Ipswich. The Executive team also hold chair trustee & Patron roles for a range of small and medium scale theatre and arts organisations in the southwest and nationally including Exeter Northcott Theatre, We The Curious, Level Playing Field, Metal Culture Limited, Wyldwood Arts, New Wolsey Theatre, and Face Front. In times that are challenging for so many, our critical advocacy role dovetails with all other activities.

The charity is a member of the Independent Theatre Council (ITC) National Association of Youth Theatres, Living Wage Foundation, Signed Culture; we are Charter Members of PIPA and are registered with the ICO. The Charity is a living wage employer, registered with the Living Wage Foundation and sets rates of pay for key management personnel based on equivalent sector market rates and level of artistic and fiscal responsibility. The Charity aims for transparency in pay rates, clear communication of criteria for pay differentials, strong freelance rates and a reduction in differential between the highest and lowest pay rates in the company where possible.

Diverse City

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Objectives and activities

The charity's objectives

Our objectives are:

- The promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit, including (but not limited to) those with physical impairments, learning disabilities and others experiencing barriers to learning, development and inclusion, by (but not limited to):
 - The provision and promotion of the arts (including by promoting the widening of participation in (but not limited to) the performing arts);
 - The provision of workshops, training programmes and coaching in the arts, in particular (but not limited to) the performing arts; and
 - The advancement of education in the arts and raising awareness in equality and diversity.
- The promotion of social inclusion for the public benefit in particular (but not limited to) among individuals who are socially excluded from society, or part of society, as a result of their social position, in particular (but without limitation) through the promotion of performing arts, including widening participation in performing arts.

How the charity's aims further its legal purposes

Diverse City is founded on the values of collaboration, justice, creativity and optimism and our vision is a healthy, just and civil society for all. Our inclusive public, performing arts practice widens participation in the arts and society, including by children and young people, and trains and promotes talented, diverse, independent artists.

The charity's strategies for achieving its stated aims and objectives

Our strategies are to identify, support and employ new and underrepresented performing artistic talent on stage and off stage; to co-produce with key partners new work rooted in the human stories and experiences of real people; increase the engagement of diverse civic artists in the evolution and tours of our shows; and to get the Next Generation of diverse artists into creative careers and employment. We want to see everyone getting into, on in, seen and heard in arts and culture so that everyone can experience universal stories as part of diverse, activated and connected communities.

The criteria the charity uses to assess success in achieving goals

Diverse City values learning. In 2024-25 the charity refreshed our quality evaluation framework to assess success in progressing towards and achieving our goals. We want to know what people think and feel whether they are audiences, venues, artists, or participants. By evaluating our progress, we learn more about how change happens. There are four areas of learning within our Evaluation Framework these are: Shows and public events; Artist and Leadership Development; Cultural Community (including partners); Sector Change. We use different tools to evaluate both quantitative and qualitative data: Culture Counts Insight and Impact Toolkit; Post show or project audience and participant vox pops; Comment collections and interviews; Case studies and observations; Sense making and journalling (qualitative); EDI monitoring; Illuminate surveys; Box Office Reports; and Carbon Footprint monitoring (quantitative). We judge success on the impact and reach of our work for all activity incorporating self and peer assessment of change catalysed by our work. We have annual targets across our planned activity and for cross cutting themes – Humane Culture, Climate Care, Business Innovation and Financial Sustainability – that map onto Arts Council England's investment principles.

Diverse City

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Significant activities undertaken and their contribution to the charity's achievement of aims and objectives

2024-25 marked the second year of our 2023-26 business plan, "A New Now". The year was marked by a reset and a rethink following the turbulent Covid years and a period of high creative output. As we watched the ripples of our Extraordinary Bodies collaboration radiate outward we turned our attention back to the creative output, relationships, strategic drive and profile of Diverse City. All our output was driven by our strategic aim to influence systemic change on a national scale around representation in the arts.

Significant activities during this period were our national tour of the reimagined production of 'Mid Life', profiling the lives and power of older women. Originally created in 2020 'Mid Life' was written by Sheila Chapman with dramaturgy and direction by Lucy Richardson. The show marked a return to Diverse City producing following an almost exclusive three-year focus on Extraordinary Bodies. Development on new works in progress – 'All We Have' and 'The Other Life I Lead' – continued with practical explorations with artists. Our annual programmes for early career artists included intensive creative development residencies to accelerate artistic experience and knowledge.

We also focused on developing and showcasing integrated talent through several high profile projects: 'Earth Wheels Air' R&D grew the creative leadership and global networks of independent artists through international exchange with Kenya; 'Take Up Space' - a collaborative digital commission to be launched next year – showcased the artist community built over the last 10 years by Extraordinary Bodies; and the broadcast of Channel 4's Paralympics homecoming ceremony saw a beautiful new duet from Extraordinary Bodies artists Jonny Leitch and early career artist Charlotte Evans performed to 9,000 people at the Birmingham's Utilita Arena. Given the significant interest in the overall Games, particularly for live and high-profile moments, a major celebratory event like the homecoming ceremony would likely have drawn a substantial broadcast audience for Extraordinary Bodies.

"I can honestly say I've never felt like such a badass and empowered as a disabled artist. Still feel like a dream that this even happened?! Getting to work alongside such experienced incredible artists was beyond an honour, so proud of our little team and the magic we created."

Charlotte Evans

How the charity delivers public benefit

The charity delivers public benefit by mitigating barriers to engagement and participation in the performing arts and by working to ensure that the cultural sector is inclusive and reflective of the widest number and range of people in our society. The charity's trustees confirm that they have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Goals

2024-25 continued with the theme a 'New Now', our goal was to keep the momentum for change around whose voices and bodies are heard and seen on national stages. Our goal was to review and reset so that the charity was in a good place to move into the future with renewed purpose in an ever evolving local and global landscape.

Our workforce comprised 15 full and part time roles with a freelance senior producer and tour booker bringing new expertise in the making and touring of complex shows in uncertain times. Our overheads budget increased from approximately £462k to £575k by the end of the same period.

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Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Grants

In 2024-25 the Charity committed to granting approximately £66.3k pa to Cirque Bijou for the shared management and delivery of our partnership collaboration; Extraordinary Bodies. The partnership fulfils our aims and objectives by embodying our ethos, vision and mission through creating practical artistic productions that promote equality and diversity and of social inclusion for the public benefit.

Volunteers

The charity currently has no permanent volunteer workforce but occasionally works with volunteers provided by partner organisations.

2024-25 Progress towards achievement of aims

Strategic Aim 1: Diversify the national cultural offer

Mid Life by Sheila Chapman in association with Theatre Royal Plymouth

We continued our focus on new work that centres underrepresented voices and tells less heard stories by reimagining our show 'Mid Life' - a vivid, rebellious and joyful exposé of menopausal life by Sheila Chapman. The new show originated in association with Theatre Royal Plymouth who provided rehearsal and production space and was supported by investment from our core funds. The major rewrite (with dramaturgy from director Lucy Richardson) introduced the framing device of a 50th birthday party, which climaxed in a DJ set, allowing audiences to literally party with us. The new iteration brought global majority characters to the fore and included new film footage that integrated more diverse local women's stories and characters into the show. The press response captures well the tone and content of the show:

"a hilarious, poignant, show about real women: a joyful celebration of being fully yourself." Brighton Source

"a warm, humorous show about connection, forgiveness and discovery... a joyous celebration of the sisterhood." Plymouth Herald

"Sheila Chapman's piece is crammed with worthy and recognisable points, humour and release, affecting backstories and counterpoints" British Theatre Guide

"Mid Life' bubbles and fizzes with wit, insight, longing and knowledge." PRSD

All We Have by Jamie Beddard

Research and development for 'All We Have' continued through residencies in Bristol. Initially a co-production with Ad Infinitum, the project shifted to being led by Jamie Beddard after George Mann stepped away. The show explores the lives of three solo sailors, examining the migrant experience, eco-activism, and ego-driven extreme travel.

New collaborations were forged with designers and musicians during R&D. One artist described the development process as:

"a chance to bring together my lived experience with the wider political moment – sailing becomes a metaphor for survival and resistance."

Jamie will now write a first draft of the show with dramaturgical support, for autumn 2025. Opportunities with cultural partners in Ipswich, Hull, Brighton, Bristol and Plymouth are opening up and a partnership round table in Plymouth linked us with key community organisations in Plymouth.

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Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

The Other Life I Lead by Ellis Davis

Artistic Director (Talent Development) Ellis Davis advanced the development of a new venture for early career artists with The Other Life I Lead, shaped through a series of creative explorations. The new piece explores masking and the liberation of being one's true self. Supported by the Trail Blazer Fund, Ellis collaborated with disabled musicians and lyricists Erin Enfys and Harry Bassett with a view to building a touring band of disabled musicians who will perform in the show. Residencies included short, musician-focused rehearsals and a dedicated music residency in autumn 2024. This gig-theatre piece provides critical early career opportunities for talent that, without support, may not otherwise be seen. Harry Bassett said of the process:

"Being part of this soundtrack is more than writing music – it's about showing that disabled musicians can lead the sound of a production."

Take Up Space by Extraordinary Bodies

Extraordinary Bodies commissioned 15 artists to collaborate on a new digital piece Take Up Space. The short film by Film maker Stephen Lake celebrates 12 years of Extraordinary Bodies artists who filmed themselves creating physical work in a natural landscape. The film is set to an original score by John Kelly for distribution in early 2026. John Kelly explained his approach:

"The soundtrack had to hold the weight of what these artists are saying with their bodies – it's about presence, resistance, and joy."

The release will highlight the political context of deepening cuts to disabled people's benefits and the essential role of the Access to Work scheme, which underpins the careers of many featured artists as an antidote to the cuts and prevalent narratives around disability and disabled people. This theme and the idea of 'taking up space' informs the broad suite of forthcoming Extraordinary Bodies projects.

Strategic Aim 2: Represent, respond to and engage diverse audiences

Over the course of the year Diverse City reached approximately 18,233 people through live public performances including 'Mid Life', 'Earth Wheels Air R&D', Extraordinary Bodies duet performance at the Paralympic Homecoming and 'Circus Around And About 2' rural touring partnership project. We reached 1,246,003 people online through social media, creative digital content and broadcast with most being Channel 4 estimated broadcast audience for the Paralympic Homecoming celebration.

Mid Life on tour

A major highlight in 2024-25 was the 'Mid Life' tour, which reached 1,500 people nationally. The tour of the original show, an Offie-nominated sell-out at Bristol Old Vic and the Barbican in early spring 2020, was truncated by Covid. We were delighted to be able to tour again during early spring 2025 to small-scale national venues in Brighton, Nottingham, Leeds, Farnham, Dorset, and Cornwall. We often played to sold-out houses demonstrating unequivocally that a majority unknown, midlife female performing company can sell tickets. A robust social media campaign expanded our online audience with a total social media reach of over 33,000, from an overwhelmingly (87%) female audience between the ages of 35-55, based in the UK (89%). From the beginning to end of the year we saw a 92% rise in the number of people we connected with online. These figures came through Instagram (Reach of 15,726) and YouTube (27,857 views) where we made our greatest gains across the year.

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Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

All 'Mid Life' shows were relaxed, audio described, captioned and BSL interpreted. Survey responses show that at least 16% of audiences were D/deaf or disabled and 15% neurodivergent. We reached an estimated 12% global majority women (where the UK's global majority population is 13.8%), which is impressive given the number of predominantly white areas to which we toured (Devon, Cornwall and Dorset). 18% of respondents to Culture Counts surveys identified as gay, lesbian or queer (in an overall population of approximately 3.5% LGBTQ+). D/deaf and disabled audiences were also well represented although not always visible in box office data.

Audience members commented:

"On a par with all of the menopause training I've had as a doctor – well done."

Another reflected on the emotional connection created:

"Thank you for the heads up of what might be to come and for connecting me to my late but great Mum."

71% of audience survey respondents said that the show 'Exceeded' or 'Somewhat exceeded' their expectations 90% of respondents found their experience of the show 'Excellent'. All in all, feedback was overwhelmingly positive reflecting both appreciation of representation and of the show's role in connecting lived experiences of midlife and ageing.

Extraordinary Bodies: Touring Diverse Led Circus

Extraordinary Bodies' Touring Diverse Led Circus final report was submitted to Arts Council England in June 2024, with impact and co-evaluation reports shared with Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Ramps on the Moon, and Fuel Basecamp to inform sector learning about diversifying audiences.

Extraordinary Bodies: Circus Around and About 2

Our partnership with Crying Out Loud and Take Art ramped up with a menu of circus shows for rural networks, supported by a 12-month grant from ACE strategic funds to Take Art. We led the access and support programme to increase the welcome to underrepresented audiences across these networks. We conducted venue access audits, offered online access familiarisation, and access trouble shooting. In Autumn 2024 troubleshooting surgeries with rural venues informed the creation of a suite of resources and case studies published on Take Art's website that aims to share the learning across the sector around widening inclusion. One rural programmer commented after one online webinar:

"This gave me practical tools to make my venue more welcoming – it made inclusivity feel possible rather than intimidating."

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For the year ended 31 March 2025

Extraordinary Bodies: Splash!

Commissioned artist Nikki Charlesworth scoped out the mechanism for taking her original animated film *Splash!* —inspired by Extraordinary Bodies' 2019 show—into SEND schools with an integrated workshop and film package.

Extraordinary Bodies: Paralympic Homecoming Show

We have always wanted our disabled artists to be integrated into the mainstream. This September, TBi media invited Extraordinary Bodies to create a spectacular aerial piece for the National Lottery's ParalympicsGB Homecoming show.

Managed and directed by Cirque Bijou, performed for a live audience of 9,000 at Birmingham's Utilita Arena, and broadcast a few days later on Channel 4, this was a huge opportunity. We invited Jonny Leitch, an incredible performer (and musician) who we've worked with for many years. When Jonny's usual aerial partner Tilly was unavailable, he suggested Charlotte Evans, a brilliant and creative disabled aerialist who has been training with Extraordinary Bodies but not yet been cast in our shows. The pair followed Craig David on the schedule. The piece perfectly demonstrated the skills of the two artists, including solo and duet moments. To be on such a visible platform, performing to millions of viewers, celebrating the ParalympicsGB team, is a moment in Extraordinary Bodies' history that none of us will forget.

Online Audiences

Audiences online continued to comprise a significant aspect of our reach. We aimed to share online content alongside live shows to both expand our reach and mitigate barriers to access to live performance for so many.

Our annual online audience of 1,246,003 was mainly the result of the broadcast of Extraordinary Bodies' performance at the Paralympic Homecoming Ceremony and mirrored public interest in the Paralympic games in August and September of 2024. Following our tour of 'Waldo's Circus of Magic and Terror' in 2023, reduced capacity meant pulling back on Extraordinary Bodies e-News and social media. We switched our attention from Twitter & Facebook over to Instagram where we saw 1000 combined audiences for 'Earth Wheels Air' digital stories. YouTube gained a modest audience of 1000 over the year, with (AD & non-AD) teasers of 'Earth, Wheels, Air' attracting 600 views. Our website worked more effectively for us, with a steadier stream of content thanks to an expanded communications team working together. The impact of the 'Mid Life' campaign was seen in the user numbers of 11,176, with new audiences reaching over 10K and an almost 100% improvement on the previous year when site visitors came to just under 6K and new visitors to just under 5K.

Strategic Aim 3 Create opportunities for the next generation of artists

Throughout the year we committed to fostering equal representation, inclusion and innovation in our workforce. Collaboration with skilled D/deaf, disabled, and non-disabled diverse performers continues to be a challenge in circus and theatre. Advanced physical skills are a challenge to the most seasoned actor if they haven't started training early and the most daring physical performers inevitably struggle with voice projection and character if they haven't had access to actor training. Financial and physical barriers to training mean that many still do not have universal access, so young people coming from less traditional backgrounds are still put off from thinking a career in the arts is for them.

Diverse City

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

We created space for new people, new ideas and new stories to come into the company. Our sights remained firmly on building the workforce that the arts and culture needs if it is to remain relevant, radical and resourceful. In 2024-25 we employed 54 contractual and freelance staff. 31% of these were artists and 27% were specialist staff. We employed 30% D/deaf, disabled people, or people living with a long-term condition; we employed 22% people from the global majority; 50% LGBTQ+; 33% Young people (20-34); 28% Neurodivergent; Women - 63%; 4% of people who identified as being from Lower Socioeconomic groups.

Earth, Wheels, Air by Extraordinary Bodies

Our international R&D circus practice exchange 'Earth, Wheels, Air' took off funded by an Unlimited International Open Award 2024. It brought Kenyan Dance Company, Pamoja Dance together with two Extraordinary Bodies artists, Tilly Lee Kronick and Jonny Leitch. The exchange aimed to share integrated circus practice and to develop the creative leadership of independent disabled artists. It provided an opportunity for the two companies to share creative skills, adaptive circus techniques and cultural practice in a collaboration that sowed the seeds for a possible future Extraordinary Bodies show.

The project gained a strong resonance and significance since it evolved at a moment when:

"The journey and development of disabled artists and leaders is under severe threat in the UK as cuts and dangerous narratives take hold...Against this backdrop, making brilliant art and collaborations like 'Earth, Wheels, Air' are just the fillips needed, and a timely reminder of why this work is so important, the different contexts in which disabled artists operate internationally and how our collective strengths can indeed create better worlds."

Jamie Beddard, Creative Mentor, 'Earth, Wheels, Air'

Online and face to face planning, remote collaboration and mentorship, preceded a journey by artists Jonny and Tilly to Nairobi Kenya in October 2024. Our Kenyan partners then came to Plymouth UK in February 2025 Hosted by Theatre Royal Plymouth at TR2.

Jonny Leitch took the lead in Kenya and Joseph Kayenje Muriithi, Artistic Director of Pamoja Dance Group, led the artistic direction in Plymouth. Circus support from Billy Alwen and rigger Saul Baum led to memorable moments such as a flying bicycle sequence and aerial crutch dancing. We opened the door to a total of over 200 invited audiences through this process and facilitated one participatory workshop in the UK. Events included a sharing for artists and industry professionals at Woodland Star International School and a sharing for children and families in Kenya; a sharing plus Q&A for industry partners, artists, friends/family, community groups and colleagues in Plymouth; and a Dance Masterclass led by Joseph Kayenje Muriithi for 18 disabled and neurodivergent dancers Aged 18-55 years run by Far Flung C.I.C. in partnership with Theatre Royal Plymouth. One participant described the exchange as:

"a magical collision of cultures and bodies – seeing Beatrice dance with her crutches alongside UK artists was unforgettable."

This exchange, initiated by Senior Producer Alice Chutter, exemplifies how international collaboration can share and strengthen practice, build resilience, and longevity for disabled artists. The project also built on our relationship with Unlimited, a key national and international commissioning and advocacy organisation for disabled-led work. Overall the project brought about significant artistic and producer development outcomes for both UK and Kenyan artists.

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Next Generation

Diverse City models inclusive practice and provides accessible ways for people to get into the creative sector. It aims to equip the Next Generation of integrated creative practitioners for a range of professional roles on stage and off it. In 2024-25 our aim was to scaffold pathways for young disabled musicians. Early career artists worked on a music residency for 20 participants as part of the Dorset County Council HAFS programme. Then in December 2024, we workshopped the songs and soundtrack for 'The Other Life I Lead' with some of the same artists. In between we made a trip to Madrid for the European Youth Festival For/With/By in July 2024, where we ran workshops and deepened relationships across Europe.

Uplift Inclusive Circus Aerial

The charity continued to work in partnership between Extraordinary Bodies and Dorset based Gems Circus School on weekly sessions offering training and progression routes for disabled and non-disabled young people aged 15–30. Aspirational workshops in SEND schools were delivered by young artists Harry Bassett and Dave Young, both alumni of Diverse City's talent development programmes.

Unexpected Leaders

"Being Disabled you face a lot of barriers. And to negotiate the barriers you're a leader already...an implicit leader. You might not call yourself a leader but every day to survive, you need to be a leader because you're negotiating barriers... People come onto the course and they're already leaders, but they don't know that they are. So, part of the Unexpected Leaders programme is telling them!"

Jamie Beddard

Our 2023-24 Unexpected Leaders cohort celebrated their achievements with a graduation ceremony in April 2024, marking the end of this transformative three-year programme supported by the National Lottery. These leaders will continue to be part of our wider network, further strengthening the impact of Diverse City's work and making recommendations to the charity for the future of the programme. The reflections of the cohort are captured below:

"I felt really supported, I was really, really nervous and I felt supported by the people around me and gently encouraged by the people around me".

"Being valued. Being listened to and asked to lead things and make things. Being trusted to do this and supported when it went wrong and when it went right."

"It was like being "re-stocked"... my confidence has been boosted".

People felt supported and enfranchised by the programme. They found much needed community and creative resource. Artist development programmes like Unexpected Leaders that prioritise accessibility and offer long term support are rare. Disabled people moving into leadership need more time and things take longer. The programme will move forward with a critical question at the core: Does Unexpected Leadership mean managing an existing system, learning its codes and rhythms, working at its pace, and spending time fighting this onslaught whilst being tokenised and feeling guilty...or is there a better way?

Diverse City

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Social Media Meltdown

Diverse City's Artistic Leadership continued to support independent disabled artists and emerging companies through rehearsal visits, online mentoring, and access guidance. This year, Eilis Davis and Claire Hodgson were seconded to The Shouting Mute (Dave Young's new company) to direct 'Social Media Meltdown' and mentor Dave respectively. The process is critical to positioning Dave Young and collaborators as leaders in creating new disabled-led work. Dave Young reflected on the support he received:

"Having Diverse City alongside me in launching The Shouting Mute has been transformative – they understand access, but more importantly, they believe in my voice."

Support for new companies

The Extraordinary Bodies artistic team also supported artists Tilly Lee Kronick and Jonny Leitch in setting up their new integrated company 'Head over Wheels' and artists Ryan Murphy and Maia Ayling with their integrated company 'Tit For Tat'. Eilis Davis acted as outside eye and critical friend to disabled artist Hugh Malyon and his company 'Squeeze Box Theatre', Diverse City also supported integrated 'Far Flung Dance Company' and acted as Creative Access Collaborator for writer, spoken word artist and activist Oneness Sankara on the development of her new one woman show about parenting a child with Down Syndrome.

Consultancy

Diverse City and Extraordinary Bodies continued to deliver informal and formal sector learning and consultancy during the year to over 300 people online and face to face. A small team of artists and core creatives were invited to present at Galway Community Circus' Culture Night in autumn 2024 and share inclusive circus practice through participatory workshops with circus trainers nationally.

Consultancy included sessions with Emerald Ant (made accessible through sessions led by Dave Young and Harry Bassett), The Royal Opera House, PiPA, Nottingham City Arts, People Make it Work Ramps on the Moon, Arts Council England, Galway Community Circus, People Make It Work, Figurative, What's Next? The senior management and wider team contributed to the sector through trusteeships, Co-chairing responsibilities, and What Next? Our focus continued to be on relationships that build the impact of our creative output, with clear strategic benefits.

Strategic Aim 4: Sustainability

We turned our attention towards the future direction of Diverse City as an organisation. To ensure we are well-placed for the next phase, we continued to work with consultants Peter Coxon and CounterCulture to guide our organisational, executive, and personal development.

Becky Hughes successfully bedded into the company in the new role of Governance and Compliance Manager, and mid-year we welcomed Georgie White Winter into the new role of Development Manager. Both roles have alleviated the pressures on and ensured the sustainability of the Executive Team. A somewhat chequered experience with outsourcing fundraising tasks, means that we are optimistic that the appointment of a Development Manager will reap rewards long-term.

Diverse City

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Alice Chutter, our experienced Senior Producer continued to work remotely from Nairobi Kenya for another 12 months enabling the instigation of our significant international exchange with Pamoja Dance. Ellis Davis – Artistic Director Talent Development - was released part time to follow her Senior Leader Apprenticeship (Arts & Culture) MBA course at The University of Wolverhampton and was successful in securing access support through the government's Access to Work scheme.

We employed Jodie Mundy with IT agent Cyan to oversee and manage the successful wholesale migration of our online systems to Microsoft Sharepoint to strengthen our data security and improve operational efficiency. Circus Aerialist Saskia Collyns replaced Alex Ford as p-t arts administrator, freelancers Paula Hammond and Laura Dickens, 'Mid Life' producer and tour Booker respectively, held tight to the reins of 'Mid Life'.

2024-25 was as busy and challenging as ever. Arts Council England continued to recognise the charity's strong leadership from the Executive team, supported by clear partnership arrangements, strong planning, good financial reporting to the board. Our progress towards our charity's mission demonstrated a resilience founded on a deep optimism and shared belief.

Financial review

2024-25 was the second year of our 2023-26 business plan "A New Now", the seventh year of Diverse City operating as a charity and receiving funding as part of Arts Council England's National Portfolio Investment Programme. The highlights of activity funded during the year include:

- The successful production and tour of the Diverse City 'Mid Life' show;
- Development of our Diverse City shows 'All We Have' and 'The Other Life I Lead';
- An international Extraordinary Bodies exchange, run in conjunction with Pamoja Dance in Kenya;
- Next Generation Extraordinary Bodies Young Artists attending the For/With/By Festival in Madrid; and
- The creation of a digital commission from Extraordinary Bodies artists called 'Take up Space'.

In 24-25 income decreased by approx £0.1m compared to the previous year. The principal funding source for the charity was grant income from the Arts Council England £536k (64% of total income) as part of the National Portfolio Investment Programme. Other income received flexes to support our planned activity and is mainly derived from grants from Trusts and Foundations, Commissions and Access to Work. Grant income supports the charity's objects of 'the promotion of equality and diversity and of social inclusion for the public benefit through: the provision and promotion of the arts, workshops, training programmes and coaching; the advancement of education in the arts and raising awareness in equality and diversity; and the widening of participation in performing arts'. Grant income was supplemented by income generated from 'Mid Life' performance and co producer funds (in cash and in kind) plus income from the charity's consultancy services.

Diverse City

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Grant income of £714k was £90k lower than the previous year. This was predominantly due to the end of the National Lottery funded Connecting Communities 3-year programme. Major grants received in the year included the Arts Council England NPO grant of £536k, £50k from the Esmée Fairbairn foundation (supporting core costs), a £45k Unlimited International Open Award 2024 funding the R&D circus practice exchange 'Earth, Wheels, Air', the final payment of £35k from the ACE Project of National Importance Grant supporting Touring Diverse Led Circus, £15k received from the Youth Music Trust: Trailblazer fund supporting music residencies for young artists, the final payment of £16k from the National Lottery supporting Connecting Communities, Access to Work grants of £14k, and £3k from Chalk Hill Trust supporting the making of the 'Mid Life' community film.

Partnership and performance income of £28k was £89k lower than the previous year, due to the 'Mid Life' show being on a smaller scale than the 'Waldo's Circus of Magic and Terror' show in the previous year. Income was received from our 'Mid Life' partners and performance venues including Theatre Royal Plymouth, Brighton Dome, University of Nottingham, Farnham Maltings, The Mowlem Theatre, Starts Arts & Environment Centre, and 'Leeds Playhouse'. Partner income was also received from Take Art Ltd for 'Circus Around and About 2'.

Other income received in the year included Donations and In kind income (£18k), Training & consultancy income (£24k), bank interest (£15k) and estimated Theatre Tax relief income relating to 'Mid Life' (£42k).

The expenditure decreased by £0.2m with project expenditure reducing by £0.3m and overhead expenditure increasing by £0.1m.

The year-on-year project expenditure decrease of £0.3m related to the Touring Diverse Led Circus 3-year touring project coming to an end in the previous financial year, and the end of the National Lottery funded Connecting Communities project. Expenditure in the year related to the tour of 'Mid Life' (a smaller and financially lighter show than the previous year's shows), 'Earth, Wheels, Air' international exchange project, Rural Touring, Training and Consultancy and the wrap-up and evaluation of the Touring Diverse Led Circus project, Connecting Communities and Unexpected Leaders programmes. Research and development costs were incurred on the next two Diverse City shows 'All We Have' and 'The Other Life I Lead'.

Overhead expenditure increased slightly by £0.1m due to the newly appointed Data and Compliance Manager and Development Manager roles, the overhaul and modernisation of our IT systems and a cost of living pay rise for all employees. The Development Manager will expand our in-house fundraising expertise.

To increase our resilience in the challenging financial arts landscape we completed a cost review of our planned overhead expenditure. We have subsequently implemented cuts to travel, meetings, training, consultancy and venue hire.

Diverse City

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

The funds position at the end of the year was £0.6m, a decrease of £0.1m. This decrease was expected due to the utilisation of restricted and designated funds that had been received, but not spent, in previous years. These funds have been allocated against project activity and overheads in the upcoming years.

The Charity takes the following actions to mitigate these risks: develops a long-term funding strategy, employs independent advisors, provides internal fundraising training, invests in relationships with funders; keeps an open conversation with touring partners about the market and future risks and plans; and collaborates with training partners, and other performing companies, to cast our talent net as widely as possible and to work nationally to identify new talent.

Trustees have created a reserves policy that aims to build a building resilience reserve that is equivalent to 4 months overheads expenditure. Trustees track cashflow and forecasts on a regular basis to highlight any potential low points and plan for this.

The review of the reserves

The total funds held by the charity at the end of the reporting period was £0.6m. The breakdown of the funds was as follows:

- Restricted funds £12k – where the donor has specified the funds are to be spent on a particular activity. These funds relate to the Youth Music Trust: Trailblazer 2-year project (£11k) and the National Lottery funded Connecting Communities Project impact reporting (£1k);
- Designated project activity funds £102k – designated to support creative activity relating to the shows 'All We Have' and 'The Other Life I Lead' and Next Generation activity;
- Designated organisational support fund £323k - designated to support essential organisational expenditure in the next three financial years, reflecting the extension of the Arts Council England National Portfolio Investment Programme;
- Designated Cultural Recovery Fund £1k – supporting IT business support costs; and
- General reserves £190k – this is in line with the reserves policy to support the long-term resilience of the charity. The aim is to achieve 4 months overheads buffer. This is tracking as planned.

Development and Marketing

In 2024-25 we navigated another change of ACE Relationship Manager, welcoming back Ruth Kapadia, who previously supported the charity before 2018. In 2024-25 Arts Council England (ACE) granted annual NPO funding of £536k pa and extended the current NPO funding period to 2026-27, requiring the submission of an extension budget by the end of 2024. We had an active dialogue with ACE about gaps in our current funding model, particularly around the position of Extraordinary Bodies within our strategic business plan. Disappointingly, ACE could not increase support to sustain Extraordinary Bodies as a strategic collaboration with Cirque Bijou, leading to a reset of our relationship with Cirque Bijou. We know that this work increases the sense that a career on and off stage is possible for D/deaf and disabled people. However, to find and train D/deaf and disabled talent, particularly in circus skills requires a 10-year commitment and a pathway into performance. Without strategic investment in the long-term sustainability of our flagship, integrated circus company, we had to pull back from developing strategic talent development programmes long term.

Diverse City

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

We increased our fundraising capacity through working with external bid writers with limited success. However, a new permanent Development Manager joined us to grow the company fundraising culture and kick start a new individual giving strategy, guided by the expert philanthropy consultant Lottie Donovan.

We were successful in an approach to Esmée Fairbairn for multi-year core funding of £50k. This investment is vital in supporting our work to diversify the arts workforce to ensure that people of intersectional identities who are excluded from, or at the margins of, careers in the arts, find their place to work, create and influence.

Work with Galway Community Circus led to their successful bid to Rethink Ireland (£142k), to share Extraordinary Bodies' inclusive circus practice across the circus sector in Ireland in 2025-26. We were also delighted to receive £3k local support from Chalk Cliff Trust for local Brighton based community engagement around Mid Life. While Talbot Village Trust generously supported the next two years of work with emerging artists with a £40k grant (the first tranche to be received Spring 2025). The potential for growing individual donations was demonstrated by small donations from supporters of 'Mid Life' and 'Earth Wheels Air', alongside an unexpected first school donation.

2024–25 was a demanding but ultimately fruitful year for income generation. The external environment has been challenging, with increased competition and shifting priorities across trusts and foundations.

Diverse City has voluntarily subscribed to the Fundraising Regulator. Payment of the Levy signals our commitment to fundraising best practice, positively contributing to ACE Dynamism Investment Principle. No complaints have been received by the charity or by a person acting on our behalf for the purposes of fundraising about fundraising activity.

The charity is registered with the ICO, has an up to date, GDPR compliant privacy policy and regularly reviewed procedures. The charity follows the Fundraising Regulator's Code of Practice and fundraising activity does not include asks to an individual person unless they have explicitly consented to be contacted for this purpose. General asks for individual donations are currently limited to occasional Crowdfunder Campaigns for our work with Children and Young People or through specific, identified fundraising events.

We produced comprehensive suites of marketing assets to support 'Mid Life's' tour, including digital teasers and dance tutorials for social media. Despite short runs that challenged word-of-mouth promotion, the show reached substantial audiences across 14 performances and reached 28k online. In 2024-25 we invested in the reshaping of how we communicate who we are and why we matter. With guidance from CounterCulture and The Space in Between, we started to refine our vision, mission, and impact objectives, and began restructuring our strategic plan and embedding it in our communications strategy. Our next steps are to redesign our website to better support donor journeys and showcase our impact through case studies.

Diverse City

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Going concern

The trustees consider that the charity will continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from the date on which these financial statements are approved for the following reasons:

- The charity holds reserves of £0.6m at the end of 2024-25. This consists of restricted funds of £12k, designated funds of £426k and general reserves of £190k (approx. 4 months running costs);
- The budget for 2025-26 includes income targets of £0.7m, 90% of this income is already confirmed. The funds forecast at the end of March 26 are £616k (designated £426k, general £188k);
- The net cash reserves forecast at the end of March 26 are £677k (restricted £6k, designated £481k, general £190k); and
- The charity has no debt.

The trustees therefore consider it appropriate to adopt the going concern basis for the preparation of the accounts, as detailed in note 1 to the financial statements.

Plans for future periods

Our future direction is articulated in our 2023-26 business plan: 'A New Now' and 2025-26 will see the evolution of a new plan for 2026-31. We will refine our strategic aims with a stronger focus on getting people into, on in and seen and heard in the performing arts and will streamline activity plans to ensure that everything aligns to our purpose and sits within our resources of time and money.

Diverse City's belief is that the arts are powerful when they are for everybody. Our vision is a world where what is on stage, off stage and in the audience reflects our infinite difference and galvanises positive change. We remain committed to fostering equal representation, inclusion and innovation in a changing performing arts sector. Our work, rooted in partnership and community, will continue to break new ground, reimagining the people, ideas and stories that shape the arts.

Looking forward, we will be progressing the development of 'All We Have' and 'The Other Life I Lead' alongside other artistic project proposals for a new family show. We are also looking at ways of embedding community and leadership work more directly, to support the creative evolution, audience development and resourcing of shows. We will widen the talent net to ensure that we are finding and supporting the best of D/deaf and disabled artists for the future.

The touring landscape remains challenging, with economic pressures limiting venues' ability to take risks or commit to co-productions. In 2025-26 we will explore new models to make and tour work more sustainably, explore new cross sector partnerships to reach more people in traditional and non-traditional settings and discuss ways in which this work might be supported by ACE strategic investment.

We have ambitions to broaden and reframe the scope of the Diverse City website and expand the public's awareness of our charity status. We will see new digital content in 2026-27 and the development of a specific project to bring all our existing digital back catalogue together in a form that is accessible and potentially income generating. We will push hard to maintain momentum in growing online audiences and by this time in 2026 we predict a 30% increase in visitors, and a 20% increase in the time they spend on our website.

Diverse City

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Our review of our longstanding collaboration with Cirque Bijou, 'Extraordinary Bodies' has evolved. Our approach and learning in this partnership have been captured in a 'Business Innovation Podcast' and Toolkit exploring partnership working, alongside national peers, which will be released in 2025. In 2025-26 Cirque Bijou and Diverse City will move to a responsive, project to project approach, adopting a simple strategic framework for decision-making to sift through and select collaboration offers. Our collaboration has a profile and track record that forms a solid foundation for the next steps in its journey, but our work together will be at a slower pace. We are already in conversation with Greenwich and Docklands Festival about an Extraordinary Bodies outdoor show commission and Galway Community Circus has invited us back to continue the circus sector change work started this year. We want to see what the ongoing appetite for Extraordinary Bodies' commissions might be and whether the collaboration is commercially sustainable without strategic support. We hope that our short film 'Take Up Space', commissioned from 15 Extraordinary Bodies' artists will act as our calling card over the next eighteen months.

We are confident in our sustainability and impact. We are resilient and experienced arts managers slowly building our influence with the cultural sector. Trustee recruitment will continue to be a focus and we will recruit into identified gaps of sector, legal and development expertise. We will continue to create the conditions for a working practice founded on values of justice and inclusion, anti-oppressive practice, and generosity.

2025-26 we will enter year three of our current NPO period and will work to secure the resources to move forward in a sound, careful and financially responsible way. Our creative projects will embody our ethos and values and showcase talents of our incredible artists. They will be made and offered in different configurations to ensure that communities and places are receiving work that is surprising, relevant, and engaging. We look forward to building on established, and finding new, partnerships that will make the 'New Now' we imagine.

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (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 charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period. In preparing those 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 judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable UK accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

Diverse City

Report of the trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2025

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which 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 charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £10 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Independent Examiners

Godfrey Wilson Limited were re-appointed as independent examiners to the charitable company during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Approved by the trustees on 2 December 2025 and signed on their behalf by



Judeline Nicholas - Co Chair



Beryl Richards - Co Chair

Independent examiner's report

To the trustees of

Diverse City

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Diverse City (the charitable company) for the year ended 31 March 2025, which are set out on pages 23 to 38.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charitable company (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 charitable 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 the charitable company'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 charitable 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 Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), which is one of the listed bodies.

Godfrey Wilson Limited also provides bookkeeping/payroll services to the charitable company. I confirm that as a member of the ICAEW I am subject to the FRC's Revised Ethical Standard 2024, which I have applied with respect to this engagement.

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 charitable 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 and 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 (FRS 102).

Independent examiner's report

To the trustees of

Diverse City

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.

Dougal Howard

Date: 2 December 2025

Dougal Howard ACA

Member of the ICAEW

Godfrey Wilson Limited

Chartered accountants and statutory auditors

5th Floor Mariner House

62 Prince Street

Bristol

BS1 4QD

Diverse City

Statement of financial activities *(incorporating an income and expenditure account)*

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Income from:					
Donations		49	18,415	18,464	2,008
Charitable activities	3	66,105	717,293	783,398	921,072
Other trading activities	4	-	23,559	23,559	8,218
Investment income		-	15,034	15,034	8,662
Total income		<u>66,154</u>	<u>774,301</u>	<u>840,455</u>	<u>939,960</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		-	169,119	169,119	94,676
Charitable activities		<u>78,628</u>	<u>688,649</u>	<u>767,277</u>	<u>1,020,138</u>
Total expenditure	6	<u>78,628</u>	<u>857,768</u>	<u>936,396</u>	<u>1,114,814</u>
Net expenditure and net movement in funds	7	(12,474)	(83,467)	(95,941)	(174,854)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		<u>24,258</u>	<u>699,619</u>	<u>723,877</u>	<u>898,731</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u><u>11,784</u></u>	<u><u>616,152</u></u>	<u><u>627,936</u></u>	<u><u>723,877</u></u>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in note 15 to the accounts.

Diverse City

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2025

	Note	£	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	11		3,831	7,208
Current assets				
Debtors	12	70,209		27,770
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>625,908</u>		<u>728,186</u>
		696,117		755,956
Liabilities				
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	13	<u>(72,012)</u>		<u>(39,287)</u>
Net current assets			<u>624,105</u>	<u>716,669</u>
Net assets	14		<u><u>627,936</u></u>	<u><u>723,877</u></u>
Funds	15			
Restricted funds			11,784	24,258
Unrestricted funds				
Designated funds			426,216	509,683
General funds			<u>189,936</u>	<u>189,936</u>
Total charity funds			<u><u>627,936</u></u>	<u><u>723,877</u></u>

The directors are satisfied that the company is entitled to exemption from the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act) relating to the audit of the financial statements for the year by virtue of section 477, and that no member or members have requested an audit pursuant to section 476 of the Act.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for:


- (i) ensuring that the company keeps proper 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 company 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 company.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the trustees on 2 December 2025 and signed on their behalf by



Judeline Nicholas - Co Chair



Beryl Richards - Co Chair

Diverse City**Statement of cash flows****For the year ended 31 March 2025**

	2025	2024
	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Net movement in funds	(95,941)	(174,854)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	4,526	4,394
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	(15,034)	(8,662)
(Increase) / decrease in debtors	(42,439)	426,602
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	32,725	(200,570)
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	(116,163)	46,910
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	15,034	8,662
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(1,149)	(1,102)
Net cash provided by investing activities	13,885	7,560
(Decrease) / increase in cash and cash equivalents in the year	(102,278)	54,470
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	728,186	673,716
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	625,908	728,186

The charity has not provided an analysis of changes in net debt as it does not have any long term financing arrangements.

Diverse City

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

1. Accounting policies

a) Basis of preparation and general information

Diverse City is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales. The registered office address is 3 Manwell Drive, Swanage, Dorset, BH19 2RB.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities in preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Diverse City 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.

b) Going concern basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the charity is able to continue as a going concern, which the trustees consider appropriate having regard to the current level of unrestricted reserves and confirmed future funding. There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

c) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from the government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received in advance of provision of performances or training and consultancy is deferred until criteria for income recognition are met.

d) Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item, is probable and the economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised.

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Diverse City

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

1. Accounting policies (continued)

e) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity: this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

f) Funds accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes 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 donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the charity.

g) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

h) Allocation of support and governance costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity, including the costs of complying with constitutional and statutory requirements and any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities on the following basis, being the proportion of total costs:

	2025	2024
Raising funds	18.1%	8.5%
Charitable activities	81.9%	91.5%

i) Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

Computer equipment	4 years straight line
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Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000.

j) 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.

k) Cash at bank and in hand

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

Diverse City

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

1. Accounting policies (continued)

l) Creditors

Creditors and provisions 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 and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

m) Financial instruments

The charitable company only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently recognised at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

n) Grants payable

Grants payable are recognised in the year in which the offer is conveyed to the recipient, except in those cases where the offer is conditional, such grants being recognised in expenditure when the conditions attached to the grant have been fulfilled.

o) Pension costs

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme for its employees. There are no further liabilities other than that already recognised in the SOFA.

p) Foreign currency transactions

Transactions in foreign currencies are translated at rates prevailing at the date of the transaction. Balances denominated in foreign currencies are translated at the rate of exchange prevailing at the year end.

q) Accounting estimates and key judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and underlying assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The key sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements are depreciation, as described in note 1i above.

Diverse City

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

2. Prior period comparative: statement of financial activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £
Income from:			
Donations	-	2,008	2,008
Charitable activities	160,348	760,724	921,072
Other trading activities	-	8,218	8,218
Investments	-	8,662	8,662
Total income	160,348	779,612	939,960
Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	-	94,676	94,676
Charitable activities	390,565	629,573	1,020,138
Total expenditure	390,565	724,249	1,114,814
Net income / (expenditure) and net movement in funds	(230,217)	55,363	(174,854)

3. Income from charitable activities

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2025 Total £
Grants	66,105	647,568	713,673
Theatre tax relief	-	41,906	41,906
Performance income	-	15,507	15,507
Partnership income	-	12,312	12,312
Total income from charitable activities	66,105	717,293	783,398

Prior period comparative:

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	2024 Total £
Grants	160,348	643,917	804,265
Performance income	-	93,000	93,000
Partnership income	-	23,807	23,807
Total income from charitable activities	160,348	760,724	921,072

Diverse City

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

4. Income from other trading activities

	2025	2024
	Total	Total
	£	£
Training and consultancy	<u>23,559</u>	<u>8,218</u>

Income from other trading activities was unrestricted for both the current and prior year.

5. Government grants

The charitable company receives government grants, defined as funding from Arts Council England, Local Authorities, Access to Work funding and the National Lottery Community Fund to fund charitable activities. The total value of such grants in the year ending 31 March 2025 was £566,129 (2024: £731,565). There are no unfulfilled conditions or contingencies attaching to these grants.

Diverse City**Notes to the financial statements****For the year ended 31 March 2025****6. Total expenditure**

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance costs £	2025 Total £
Fundraising	27,758	-	-	27,758
Project costs	-	317,006	-	317,006
Grants payable (note 10)	-	68,684	-	68,684
Staff costs (note 8)	98,495	155,041	173,396	426,932
Freelance	-	29,395	-	29,395
Staff training	-	2,674	-	2,674
Travel and subsistence	-	-	13,573	13,573
Governance	-	-	6,919	6,919
Insurance	-	-	3,935	3,935
Subscriptions	-	-	2,161	2,161
Other administrative costs	-	-	21,882	21,882
Accountancy	-	-	3,980	3,980
Legal and professional fees	-	-	1,192	1,192
IT and design	-	-	5,779	5,779
Depreciation	-	-	4,526	4,526
Sub-total	126,253	572,800	237,343	936,396
Allocation of support and governance costs	42,866	194,477	(237,343)	-
Total expenditure	169,119	767,277	-	936,396

Total governance costs were £10,899 (2024: £11,423).

Diverse City

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

6. Total expenditure (continued)

Prior period comparative:

	Raising funds £	Charitable activities £	Support and governance costs £	2024 Total £
Fundraising	13,404	-	-	13,404
Project costs	-	539,868	-	539,868
Grants payable (note 10)	-	84,490	-	84,490
Staff costs (note 8)	63,076	179,893	137,844	380,813
Freelance	-	9,378	10,074	19,452
Staff training	-	10,445	-	10,445
Travel and subsistence	-	-	15,600	15,600
Governance	-	-	8,623	8,623
Insurance	-	-	6,504	6,504
Subscriptions	-	-	2,896	2,896
Other administrative costs	-	-	16,777	16,777
Accountancy	-	-	5,580	5,580
Legal and professional fees	-	-	5,968	5,968
Depreciation	-	-	4,394	4,394
Sub-total	76,480	824,074	214,260	1,114,814
Allocation of support and governance costs	<u>18,196</u>	<u>196,064</u>	<u>(214,260)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total expenditure	<u><u>94,676</u></u>	<u><u>1,020,138</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>1,114,814</u></u>

Diverse City

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

7. Net movement in funds

This is stated after charging:

	2025 £	2024 £
Depreciation	4,526	4,394
Trustees' remuneration	Nil	Nil
Trustees' reimbursed expenses	1,038	797
Auditors' remuneration (ex VAT):		
▪ Independent examination	2,900	2,800
▪ Other services	500	350

3 trustees were reimbursed for travel expenses during the year (2024: 4).

In common with other charities of our size and nature we use our auditors to assist with the preparation of the financial statements and to prepare and submit returns to the tax authorities.

8. Staff costs and numbers

Staff costs were as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Salaries and wages	386,999	347,680
Social security costs	31,612	25,747
Pension costs	8,321	7,386
Subtotal	426,932	380,813
Freelance staff	29,395	19,452
	456,327	400,265
Redundancy pay	642	-

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the current or prior year.

The key management personnel of the charitable company comprise the trustees, Artistic Directors, Executive Director and Finance Manager. The total employee benefits of the key management personnel were £214,816 (2024: £192,203).

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Average head count	15.0	15.7
Average FTE	9.5	8.9

Diverse City

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

9. Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

10. Grants payable

	2025 £	2024 £
Grants to institutions: Cirque Bijou	66,324	74,440
Grants to 7 individuals (2024: 17)	<u>2,360</u>	<u>10,050</u>
Total grants awarded	<u>68,684</u>	<u>84,490</u>

There are no support costs incurred which directly relate to grants payable.

Grants awarded to Cirque Bijou are in relation to their joint project Extraordinary Bodies which is funded by Arts Council England.

11. Tangible fixed assets

	Computer equipment £
Cost	
At 1 April 2024	22,495
Additions in year	1,149
Disposals in year	<u>(3,397)</u>
At 31 March 2025	<u>20,247</u>
Depreciation	
At 1 April 2024	15,287
Charge for the year	4,526
Disposals in year	<u>(3,397)</u>
At 31 March 2025	<u>16,416</u>
Net book value	
At 31 March 2025	<u>3,831</u>
At 31 March 2024	<u>7,208</u>

Diverse City

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

12. Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	18,888	8,112
Accrued Income	51,132	18,687
Other debtors	189	971
	<u>70,209</u>	<u>27,770</u>

13. Creditors: amounts due within 1 year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	33,859	19,374
Accruals	33,857	10,394
Other taxation and social security	2,389	8,369
Other creditors	1,907	1,150
	<u>72,012</u>	<u>39,287</u>

14. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	3,831	3,831
Current assets	11,784	498,228	186,105	696,117
Current liabilities	-	(72,012)	-	(72,012)
Net assets at 31 March 2025	<u>11,784</u>	<u>426,216</u>	<u>189,936</u>	<u>627,936</u>

	Restricted funds £	Designated funds £	General funds £	Total funds £
Prior period comparative				
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	7,208	7,208
Current assets	24,258	548,970	182,728	755,956
Current liabilities	-	(39,287)	-	(39,287)
Net assets at 31 March 2024	<u>24,258</u>	<u>509,683</u>	<u>189,936</u>	<u>723,877</u>

Diverse City

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

15. Movements in funds

	At 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 March 2025 £
Restricted funds					
Community engagement	20,704	16,561	(36,422)	-	843
Next Gen	-	14,937	(3,996)	-	10,941
Touring diverse led circus	3,554	34,656	(38,210)	-	-
Total restricted funds	24,258	66,154	(78,628)	-	11,784
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds:</i>					
Designated access/rehearsals	9,147	-	-	(9,147)	-
Designated project funds	182,937	227,784	(330,765)	22,522	102,478
Organisational support	313,249	546,517	(523,442)	(13,375)	322,949
Cultural recovery fund	4,350	-	(3,561)	-	789
<i>Total designated funds</i>	<i>509,683</i>	<i>774,301</i>	<i>(857,768)</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>426,216</i>
General funds	189,936	-	-	-	189,936
Total unrestricted funds	699,619	774,301	(857,768)	-	616,152
Total funds	723,877	840,455	(936,396)	-	627,936

Purposes of restricted funds

Community engagement

The funds relate to a National Lottery Community Grant used to fund a three year Community Engagement project. The final grant payment of £17k was received during the year with related expenditure of £36k. The total grant was £197k over three years. The activity finished within the financial year and the remaining funds of £0.8k will be used for reporting the project activity and impact.

Touring diverse led circus

The final payment of £35k relating to a Project of National Importance grant received from the Arts Council of England was received during the financial year. These funds were received to support a three year Extraordinary Bodies touring programme in partnership with seven theatre venues. The touring programme finished in June 2023. The final grant was used to wrap up the project and create a film containing Extraordinary bodies artists, this will be released in the next financial year. The income and expenditure is now complete and the reserves are zero.

Diverse City

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Next Generation - Trailblazer

Funds of £15k were received during the year as the first grant payment from the Youth Music Trust: Trailblazer Fund. The related expenditure was £4k. This grant supports a 2-year programme of inclusive music training, collaborative composition, and mentoring to talented emerging D/deaf, disabled, and neurodiverse young artists from across England. The total grant for the two year period is £30k.

15. Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of designated funds

Designated access/rehearsals

The access/rehearsal reserves of £9k were transferred to the designated project reserve and spent on the production cost of the Mid Life show that toured Feb/March 2025.

Designated project funds

The project reserves relate to funds that have been allocated to specific activities in line with organisational budgets. A transfer of £13k was received from Organisational Support funds and £9k from Access/rehearsal funds to support Mid Life production and touring costs. The fund has reduced due to expenditure relating to the Mid Life show, Next Generation activity and the Earth, Wheels Air project (Extraordinary Bodies work in Kenya in partnership with Pamoja Dance). The designated funds will support development of the shows 'All We Have' and 'The Other Life I Lead' and Next Generation activity.

Organisational support

The organisational support reserves were designated to support essential organisational expenditure including salaries and infrastructure costs. The reserve has increased in order to support required expenditure in the next three financial years, in line with the Arts Council England National Portfolio Investment Programme extension years. A transfer of £13k was made to the project reserve to support Mid Life Production and Tour costs.

Cultural recovery fund

The funds relate to the remaining expenditure from grants received for the Cultural Recovery Fund. These funds continue to support depreciation on assets bought with the fund. The fund will be fully spent in the next financial year.

General funds

The general reserves support building resilience and amount to approx 4 months running costs.

Diverse City

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

15. Movements in funds (continued)

Prior period comparative

	At 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers between funds £	At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted funds					
Community engagement	(49,051)	160,348	(90,593)	-	20,704
Touring diverse led circus	303,526	-	(299,972)	-	3,554
Total restricted funds	<u>254,475</u>	<u>160,348</u>	<u>(390,565)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>24,258</u>
Unrestricted funds					
<i>Designated funds:</i>					
Designated access/rehearsals	10,856	1,442	(2,789)	(362)	9,147
Designated project funds	212,242	300,611	(331,136)	1,220	182,937
Organisational support	223,247	477,559	(386,760)	(797)	313,249
Cultural recovery fund	7,975	-	(3,564)	(61)	4,350
<i>Total designated funds</i>	<u>454,320</u>	<u>779,612</u>	<u>(724,249)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>509,683</u>
General funds	189,936	-	-	-	189,936
Total unrestricted funds	<u>644,256</u>	<u>779,612</u>	<u>(724,249)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>699,619</u>
Total funds	<u>898,731</u>	<u>939,960</u>	<u>(1,114,814)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>723,877</u>

16. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the current or prior year.