

# UNDERGROUND LIGHTS

England & Wales · Charity number 1179553

## Details

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**Status** Registered

**Legal form** CIO

**Registered** 2018-08-14

**Register** [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

## Contact

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**Address** C/O Belgrade Theatre Trust Ltd  
Belgrade Square  
Corporation Street  
Coventry  
CV1 1GS

**Phone** 07885964293

**Email** [info@undergroundlights.org](mailto:info@undergroundlights.org)

**Website** [undergroundlights.org](http://undergroundlights.org)

## Activities

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**Objects:** FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT, THE RELIEF OF THOSE IN NEED, IN PARTICULAR BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY, PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS AND/OR MENTAL DISTRESS IN THE COVENTRY, WARWICKSHIRE AND SURROUNDING AREA THROUGH THE PROVISION OF DRAMA/PERFORMING ARTS WORKSHOPS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES OR FORMS OF TRAINING/SUPPORT.

**Activities:** For the public benefit, the relief of those in need, in particular but not exclusively, people experiencing homelessness and/or mental distress in the Coventry, Warwickshire and surrounding area through the provision of drama/performing arts workshops and other activities or forms of training/support.

## Classification

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- **How:** Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Disability
- **Who:** Other Defined Groups

## Geography

- Coventry City
- Warwickshire

## Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£78,294	£63,842	-	-
2024-03-31	£13,527	£65,534	-	-
2023-03-31	£62,318	£38,013	-	-
2022-03-31	£62,831	£47,703	-	-
2021-03-31	£37,263	£35,006	-	-

## Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
<b>Georgia Dee Jaji</b>	Chair	2024-10-17
Benedict Davenport		2022-04-01
Benita Belgrove		2024-04-25
Dr Daniela Evans		2025-06-05
Professor Nadine Holdsworth		2022-04-01
Simon Christopher Knowles		2025-07-17
Sophie Hall		2023-07-18
Tracy Villiers		2019-03-18

**UNDERGROUND LIGHTS**

England & Wales - Charity number 1179553

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# Accounts

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# ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025

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MARCH 2025

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WITH THANKS  
TO OUR  
SUPPORTERS

## INTRODUCTION

### Trustees' Report for the year ended 31st March 2025

The trustees of Underground Lights present their report with Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2025. The trustees confirm that the Annual Report and financial statements comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).

### Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Status:	Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) Charity number 1179553 (Registered 14th August 2018)
Registered Address:	c/o Belgrade Theatre, Belgrade Square, Corporation Street, Coventry CV1 1GS
Trustees who served the charity during the period were as follows:	Mandip Seehra (Chair) Benedict Davenport Nadine Holdsworth Sophie Hall Tracy Villiers Benita Belgrove (from May 2024) Jan Winter (to July 2024) Georgia Dee Jaji (from October 2024)

## INTRODUCTION

### Reference and Administrative Details

Staff:

- Beth Fiducia-Brookes, Artistic Director/CEO
- Emily Jenkins, Membership Manager
- Liz Churchill, Drama Facilitator
- Hayley Harman, Projects & Activities Assistant (to August 2024), Creative Facilitator (from September 2024)
- Wes Finch, Sessional Facilitator
- Indie Prasad, Sessional Facilitator (to September 2024)
- Becky Eccleston, Finance Officer
- Chris Campell, IT Officer

Volunteers:

- Cecelia Stower (Drama)
- Francesca Rogers (Volunteer Executive Assistant)
- Susan Sadler (Drama)
- Thomas Smith (Creative Cafe)
- Emma Burke (Creative Cafe) (from September 2024)
- Nikola Cahil (Drama) (from September 2024)
- Tracey Kenny (Finance) (from September 2024)

We write this in memory of Arshak, long-term member of Underground Lights, a true gentleman and kind soul, who sadly passed away in July 2024.

Independent examiner: Alan Rylett

## STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Underground Lights is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. It became a constituted organisation on 23rd March 2018 and a registered charity on 14th August 2018.

The trustees as a group are responsible for the overall governance of the Charity and the constitution requires there to be a minimum of three trustees. The trustees are not remunerated for their work. They aim to meet at least four times per year and are responsible for all major financial and strategic decisions, and the establishment of major policies.

Apart from the first trustees, every trustee is appointed for a term of three years. In selecting trustees the board has regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the Charity. Our commitment to being a member-led organisation means that it is important to recruit individuals to our board who have experience of mental health issues and/or homelessness.

Individuals interested in joining the board complete an application form which the board then reviews, if the board votes to progress the application the candidate is then invited for a telephone or face to face conversation with a designated board member/ Chair of Trustees. The role and responsibilities of a trustee are discussed in more detail at this point. If both parties wish to pursue the application a new trustee is appointed by resolution at a convened meeting of the board of trustees. New trustees are required to sign a Code of Conduct and are given a pack containing our constitution, strategic plan, latest annual report and accounts and links to the Charity Commission's advice relating to the roles and responsibilities of trustees.

Day-to-day management of the Charity has been delegated to the Artistic Director/CEO. The Artistic Director/CEO is supported by a Membership Manager, Drama Facilitator, Projects & Activities Assistant, Finance Officer, IT Officer Sessional Facilitators/Assistants and volunteers who are in turn responsible for the delivery of our work.

Grant applications prior to consideration by the trustees are handled by the Artistic Director/CEO.

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Underground Lights is an independent community theatre charity that is run for and by people experiencing homelessness and/or mental health issues.

Our charitable purpose is for the public benefit, the relief of those in need, in particular but not exclusively, people experiencing homelessness and/or mental distress in the Coventry, Warwickshire and surrounding area through the provision of drama/performing arts workshops and other activities or forms of training/support.

The trustees confirm that in setting objectives and planning activities, they have given due consideration to general guidance by the Charity Commission relating to public benefit and in particular to its supplementary public benefit guidance.

Our vision is to be a safe and inspiring creative community, for people on the margins of society, that is owned and run by us.

### THE MISSION OF THE CHARITY IS AS FOLLOWS:

- To bring together people experiencing (or at risk of experiencing) homelessness, mental or emotional distress, trauma, social isolation and marginalisation.
- To develop confidence, skills and friendship networks by providing creative opportunities and empowering people to explore their own creative identities through theatre, dance, poetry and music.
- To support each other and create a safe and caring space where people can belong.
- To challenge assumptions and stereotypes through the creation of high-quality artistic work.



**Our vision is to be a safe and inspiring creative community, for people on the margins of society, that is owned and run by us.**

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

This year has seen vibrant and meaningful engagement across our creative programmes, with members and audiences alike benefitting from inclusive, inspiring, and culturally rich experiences.

### SUMMER 2024

#### Creative Café at St Mary's Guildhall, Coventry

A highlight of the year, the Creative Café project brought members together to create and perform original work inspired by the Guildhall's medieval history. The Open Mic performance in the Great Hall was a resounding success, attended by 35 audience members. Workshop attendance averaged 17. Audience feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with comments celebrating the energy, imagination, and bravery of performers in such a magnificent historic setting. Member reflections highlighted personal growth, increased confidence, and appreciation for collaborative creativity.



#### Drama Groups

Both drama groups explored medieval themes, visiting the Herbert Art Gallery and the Belgrade Theatre for inspiration. Creativity flourished and feedback acknowledged the inclusive environment and the confidence-building impact of participation. The theme was well received, particularly the use of humour and historical context in performances.





## EXTRACT FROM THE GUILDHALL SONG

This building has a long history  
Built long ago in the 14<sup>th</sup> century  
Rich men, merchants and royalty  
Have trod on these stone floors

Built for the guild of St Mary  
St Michael and Holy Trinity  
When Coventry was a capital city  
Many years ago

### Chorus

Guildhall in the heart of the city  
Many years of history  
Rich and poor, old and new  
Side by side like you and me

Halls and corridors to roam  
Built with the bricks of the red sandstone  
Dungeons and passages down below  
But we don't know where they go

---

Original song co-created by Wes and UL Members

## OTHER ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

### Autumn 2025 Term Overview

The Autumn Term was filled with creativity, community spirit, and national recognition for our inclusive work. Activities across our Creative Café and drama groups flourished, while our staff team continued to prioritise development, training, and reflective practice.

#### National Reflection

We were proud to win 'The Welcoming Award' at the National Insight Awards by Expert Citizens. The award was accepted by staff members and volunteers, and reflects our ongoing commitment to creating safe, inclusive, and inspiring spaces for all.



## ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

### AUTUMN 2025

#### Creative Cafe

Creative Café returned to Coventry Central Hall and continued to thrive, with strong attendance and a supportive atmosphere.

- The group selected 'Seasons' as their creative theme for the term.
- A member-only Open Mic on 23rd October provided an informal space to practice.
- The public Open Mic on 4th December featured 18 performers and welcomed 18 audience members.
  - Audience feedback highlights:
    - "The way everyone supports each other so beautifully."
    - "Made me feel a lot better, away from difficulties at home."
- Special thanks to Benita for her regular presence and support, and to all trustees who attended workshops and events.
- We also welcomed new volunteers Emma and Thomas - thank you both for your contributions.



**"Bravo everybody!  
Always a pleasure to  
see the range of talent –  
songs, poetry, drama –  
everyone was brilliant and  
brave."**

**AUDIENCE FEEDBACK**

## SPRING 2025 TERM OVERVIEW

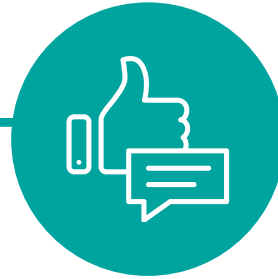
### Drama Groups

Both groups had a fantastic term, continuing to develop original work and deepen engagement.

- Members explored the theme 'Who is Theatre For?', conducting interviews and using verbatim theatre techniques.
  - One group created a short video piece (available on our YouTube channel).
  - The second group devised a short live performance, with support from the Sir Barry Jackson Trust.
  - End-of-term sharings took place at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry Central Hall, and homeless hostel Harnall Lifehouse.

### Member Feedback Included:

- "I learned how to work as part of a team and thoroughly enjoyed the session."
- "Confidence improved because I'd not done acting before."
- "Drama – I come out of the house. It helps me to see other aspects of life instead of just my view."
- Thanks to Mandip for documenting the work through photography.
- We were also thrilled to enjoy a successful pantomime trip, made possible by donated tickets from the Belgrade Theatre.
- Interest in joining has increased, and our waiting list is growing once again.



Member feedback:

**"If it wasn't for Underground Lights, I would be doing nothing."**

**"Turning up on time, meeting new friends, a social circle within the team. And I am getting recognised."**



Photo from 'Who is Theatre for?' Q&A

## SPRING 2025 TERM OVERVIEW

### Members and Outreach

- At Harnall Lifehouse, Beth and UL member Andy conducted a workshop and interviews with residents, helping to inform drama content. One drama performance also took place at the venue.
- The Recovery Academy online workshop 'Creating Characters', delivered by Hayley and Emily, was well received and supported further engagement.

This term reflected the best of Underground Lights - collaborative creativity, mutual support, and inclusive opportunity.



## SPRING 2025 TERM OVERVIEW

### Creative Groups

The Spring Term was a vibrant and productive period, marked by strong creative development, and increased public engagement across our Creative Café and drama groups. We also deepened our outreach and visibility through external partnerships and public events.

### Creative Café

This term featured an exciting series of song-making workshops, funded by Warwick University Institute of Engagement. A former member was paid to lead one of the sessions - an important milestone in our ongoing commitment to member progression. The project was also featured on the BBC, bringing wider recognition to our work.

- Members-Only Open Mic (12th February): 17 performers, approx. 15 audience members
- Public Open Mic (2nd April): 21 performers and 41 audience members
  - Feedback:
    - Excellent: 45.45%
    - Very Good: 45.45%

Audience comments:

- “Realised that every person can have a confident performance, the best, regardless of their illness and disability.”
- “Thank you for the opportunity to get out and enjoy myself and witness everyone enjoying each other's company. Bravo.”
- “I enjoyed every part of this event, most especially the singing part.”

Special thanks to Benita and Nadine for their consistent support, and to all trustees who attended workshops and events. Placement students also provided valuable assistance and took some fantastic photographs.



## SPRING 2025 TERM OVERVIEW

### Drama Groups

Members selected their own themes this term, leading to two distinct and imaginative explorations: one group focused on aliens, the other on mistaken identity.

- End of Term Sharing (28th March): 18 performers, 26 audience members
  - Feedback showed high engagement, with a majority rating the event as "Amazing" using our feedback dot system.
  - Descriptive feedback included: Entertaining, Hopeful,

- Colourful, Authentic, and Wholesome.

- Member reflections highlighted:
  - Increased confidence, skills, and community connection
  - Regular engagement in creative tasks and performance
  - Goals met in teamwork, vocal clarity, and creative expression
  - Sessions described as: fun, inspiring, magical, hopeful, imaginative
- Prop-making workshops for both groups were very well received.



## SPRING 2025 TERM OVERVIEW

### Members and Outreach

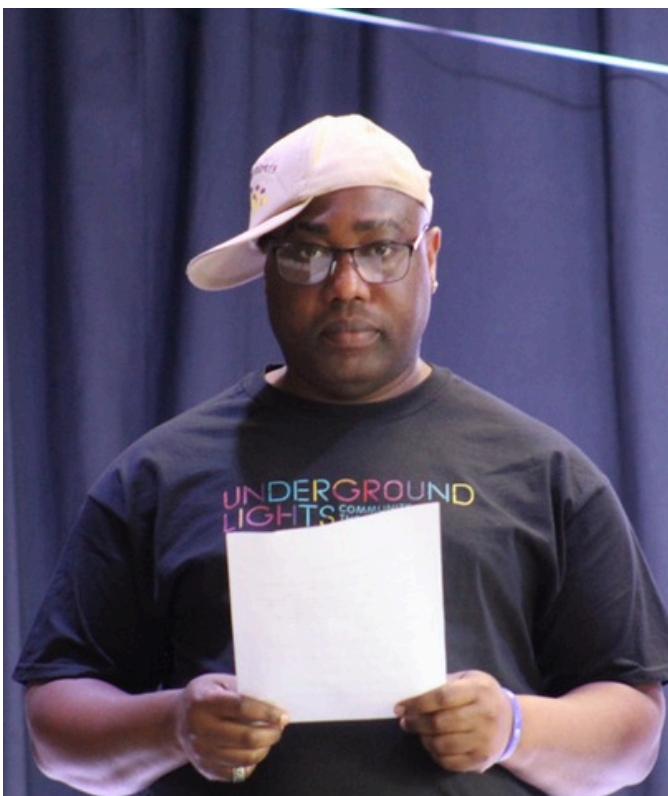
- Kairos Workshop led by Emily and Liz, with 8 attendees.
- Community Wellbeing Day at the Belgrade Theatre:
  - Postcard Art drop-in led by Beth and Benita
  - Information stand hosted by Francesca and Tracy
- Beth & Hayley presented at the Collective Encounters Online Artist Showcase, representing Underground Lights' innovative approach to community arts.

Spring 2025 was marked by creativity, confidence building, and visibility across platforms and communities. We are incredibly proud of our members' achievements and the continued support from staff, trustees, partners, and volunteers.

### Other Activities and Achievements

#### Training and Staff Development

Our team has actively engaged in a range of training opportunities this year, ensuring we continue to provide a safe, supportive, and informed environment for members, volunteers, and staff.



## SPRING 2025 TERM OVERVIEW

### Other Activities and Achievements

Safeguarding Training: Termly in-house safeguarding sessions were held with Ben – thank you for your continued support. Emily completed Safeguarding for Young People, Children & Vulnerable Adults training via CAVA.

- Online Safety: completed by staff team.
- Trauma-Informed Practice: Emily completed Trauma Informed Practice. Beth and Liz attended Trauma Informed Practice Part 2 with Kazzum Arts. Beth also participated in a 2-hour session on Understanding Trauma, delivered by Migrant Mental Health.
- Supervision and Leadership: Beth completed Staff Supervision Skills

training with WMCA, supporting the development of reflective and effective team leadership.

- Reflective Practice: A group reflective practice session was held, providing staff with a valuable space for shared learning, emotional support, and strategic thinking. Individual sessions were also carried out. In addition to our post-workshop debriefs.

These activities reflect our ongoing commitment to professional development and to creating a safe, trauma-informed, and empowering space for everyone involved with Underground Lights.



## GENERAL UPDATES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- Trustee Nadine Holdsworth received the 'Warwickshire High Sheriff Award' in recognition of her support at Underground Lights and Arts and Homelessness International
- In-Kind support from the Belgrade Theatre - Our relationships with the Belgrade Theatre continues to be a supportive one where we are able to use workshop and storage space and ad hoc staff support.
- Strategy - The Core Strategic Group is operating as a drop-in space with all members, staff and volunteers welcome to join and feed into the discussion about UL and our future, meetings have been ad hoc but well attended.
- School workshops – outreach workshop at King's High School in Warwick



## UL MEMBER CASE STUDY - ANONYMOUS

### What do you enjoy about Underground Lights?

- I've had a mad journey, I have been homeless more times than you can imagine. I have been in 10 prisons, addiction, suffered sexual abuse, rape, but Underground Lights has given me something positive to focus on. It has stopped the flashbacks and nightmares and start looking to the future. And also I like the people in the groups. Everyone has their own little quirks and I think we bounce off each other and make something special happen. Finding these people has meant I have support around me and it is these people that have stopped me going back to my addiction because I am always in recovery. The more I focus on Underground Lights the better things have been going for me. I saw my sister recently who I haven't seen in 20 years. [...] It's made me happy and made me come out of myself and realise there is more to life than smoking drugs. I am starting work at a soup kitchen soon where I will be supporting people that I used to be in prison with, or smoked drugs with, and they can see I have gone in a different direction with my life. With the support of the staff and the people at UL I have really. [...] There should be more set ups like UL.

### What has been the highlight of performances?

- Out of all of them it was performing at Harnall Lifehouse. I was there myself (using the service) 20 years ago. It was just great to walk in there, see all the old staff, and they all see me with like my new clothes. And obviously a lot of the people there I used to do drugs and hang out with on the street. I was so nervous. It was like I was naked. But it was wicked! It felt amazing when it was done to see my journey from that time to now. It was a really good experience.
- Through doing UL I got community spirit, friends, a bus pass which is so helpful and the buzz for performing.
- It brings people out of their shell. Brings people together with shared lived experiences. I like the community part of it. I know for a fact people look forward to Friday.

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

### Annual Reports 2024 - 2025

During the period April 2024 – March 2025, Underground Lights received total income of £78,294 including donations from individuals gifts in kind. Total expenditure for the same period was £63,842 which meant the balance held at the end of this period was £44,076. Of this, £4,842 was restricted for use on the Project, salaries, workshops or training.

Reserves are held to cover three months' running costs in case of future unsuccessful fundraising.

In preparing the financial statements the trustees believe that Underground Lights will continue as an ongoing concern until April 2026.

This report was approved by the trustees on 25/07/2025 and signed on their behalf by:



**GEORGIA DEE JAJI**  
**Acting Chair of Trustees**

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

<b>STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES</b> <b>Year ended 31st March 2025</b>	Unrestricted fund	Restricted fund	Year ended 31/03/25 Total Funds	Year ended 31/03/24 Total Funds
<b>Income</b>				
Donations	14,381	-	<b>14,381</b>	1,415
Charitable Activities	25,719	34,876	<b>60,595</b>	10,627
Other Income	3,318	-	<b>3,318</b>	1,485
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>43,418</b>	<b>34,876</b>	<b>78,294</b>	13,527
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Staffing Costs	12,459	34,134	46,593	49,596
Volunteers' costs	14	194	208	255
Operational/ Activity	13,218	857	14,075	11,406
Publicity / Marketing	616	225	841	1,243
Other Administration	1,313	812	2,125	3,034
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>27,620</b>	<b>36,222</b>	<b>65,842</b>	<b>65,534</b>
<b>NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE)</b>	<b>15,796</b>	<b>(1,344)</b>	<b>14,452</b>	<b>(52,007)</b>
<b>Total funds brought forward at 31st March 2023</b>	<b>23,438</b>	<b>6,186</b>	<b>29,624</b>	<b>81,631</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>39,234</b>	<b>4,842</b>	<b>44,076</b>	<b>81,631</b>

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

### BALANCE SHEET

Year ended 31st March 2025

	Unrestricted fund	Restricted fund	Year ended 31/03/25 Total Funds	Year ended 31/03/24 Total Funds
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Cash at Bank	47,751	4,842	52,593	62,705
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>47,751</b>	<b>4,842</b>	<b>52,593</b>	<b>62,705</b>
Creditors: amounts falling due within One year	(8,517)	-	<b>(8,517)</b>	(33,081)
<b>Net current assets/(liabilities)</b>	<b>39,234</b>	<b>4,842</b>	<b>44,076</b>	<b>29,624</b>
<b>FUNDS</b>				
Unrestricted fund	-	-	39,234	23,438
Restricted fund	-	-	4,842	6,186
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>44,076</b>	<b>29,217</b>

For the financial year ending 31st March 2025 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

#### Charity Trustees Responsibilities:

- The members have not required the charity to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476; and
- The charity trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The financial statements on pages were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue and signed on their behalf by:

**GEORGIA DEE JAJI**                      **17/08/2025**  
**Acting Chair of Trustees**



## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### **Basis of preparing the financial statements**

The financial statements of the CIO have been prepared using the accruals basis together with the statement of recommended practice for charities 2011.

### **Taxation**

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

### **Fund Accounting**

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

### **Volunteer help**

The value of any volunteer help received is not included in the financial statements but is described in the trustees' report.

### **Trustees' Remuneration and Benefits**

No Member received any remuneration or other benefits for being a trustee.

Trustees' expenses - No expenses were paid to trustees

### **Restricted Funds**

Restricted funds held at 31st March 2025

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

### EXPENDITURE

Year ended 31st March 2025

	Balance B/F	Received	Spent	Balance C/F
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Events and Workshops	-	7,376	(7,176)	200
Core salaries	-	27,500	27,500	-
Development & Capacity Building	4,688	-	533	4,155
Member training and Upskilling	1,011	-	1,011	-
Wellbeing Fund	487	-	-	487
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,186</b>	<b>34,876</b>	<b>36,220</b>	<b>4,842</b>

### Restricted funding received from:

- A&HI - Creative Cafe and Open Mic events
- Cole Charitable Trust – Member Training and Up-skilling
- Heart of England Charitable Foundation - Creative Cafes and Open Mic Events
- Tudor Trust - Salaries and Wellbeing grant

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

### STAFFING

	This year	Last year
Gross Salaries		
Gross Salaries	45,778	48,743
Employer's NICs	2,492	2,698
Employment Allowance	(2,492)	(2,698)
Employer's Pension	815	853
<b>Total</b>	<b>49,596</b>	<b>49,596</b>

The average number of employees over the year was 5 (FTE in 2024:5).

### DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS

There were no debtors or pre-payments.

### CREDITORS AND ACCRUALS

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Income in Advance	6,970
Pension, PAYE and NICs	1,547
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,517</b>

### TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

No member received any remuneration or other benefits for being a trustee. Expenses of £105 were paid to Jan Winter to attend a training day (2024: £0) The fee for the Independent Examination was £nil.

### VOLUNTEER HELP

The value of any volunteer help received is not included in the financial statements but is described in the trustees' report.

### RELATED PARTIES

There were no transactions with related parties

# FINANCIAL REVIEW

**CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES**

## Independent examiner's report on the accounts

**Section A** Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees**  
 Charity Name: Underground Lights  
 Charity no (if any): 1179553

**On accounts for the year ended**  
 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

**Set out on pages**  
 One

**Responsibilities and basis of report**  
 I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2025.  
 As the charity's trustees, 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 which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:  
 • the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or  
 • the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or  
 • the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.  
 I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

**Signed:** *A. Rylett* **Date:** 26 July 2025  
**Name:** Alan Rylett

**Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):**

**Address:** 1 Borrowdale Dr  
 Leamington Spa, CV32 6NY

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Oct 2018

**Disclosure**  
 Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC-32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).  
 The accounts were examined and to the extent that papers have been provided computer records have made the accounts clear and precise.

October 2018

# FINANCIAL REVIEW

**Financial Review**

During the period April 2024 – March 2025, Underground Lights received total income of £78,294 including donations from individuals gifts in kind. Total expenditure for the same period was £63,842 which meant the balance held at the end of this period was £44,076. Of this, £4,842 was restricted for use on the Project, salaries, workshops or training. Reserves are held to cover three months' running costs in case of future unsuccessful fundraising.

In preparing the financial statements the trustees believe that Underground Lights is a going concern.

This report was approved by the trustees on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

*GDJ*  
Georgia Dee, Acting Chair of Trustees

**BALANCE SHEET**  
For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Unrestricted fund	Restricted funds	Year ended 31.03.25 Total Funds	Year ended 31.03.24 Total Funds
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Cash at Bank	47,751	4,842	52,593	62,705
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	47,751	4,842	52,593	62,705
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(8,517)		(8,517)	(33,081)
<b>Net current assets/(liabilities)</b>			<b>44,076</b>	<b>29,624</b>
<b>FUNDS</b>				
Unrestricted fund			39,234	23,438
Restricted fund			4,842	6,186
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>			<b>44,076</b>	<b>29,217</b>

The financial statements on pages were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue and signed on their behalf by:

Name: Georgia Dee Jaji  
*GDJ*  
Acting Chair of Trustees

Date: Approval: 25<sup>th</sup> July 2025  
Signed: 17<sup>th</sup> August 2025



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## WITH THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Throughout the year, our work has remained rooted in creativity, community, and collaboration. We thank our members, audiences, and partners for their continued support and participation.

Underground Lights would like to thank all the people who have given their time and money to help us continue our work, and particularly:

Players of People's Postcode Lottery

The Belgrade Theatre

Tudor Trust

Sir Barry Jackson Trust

Warwick University Institute of Engagement

29th May 1961 Charitable Trust

St Mary's Guildhall, Coventry

Everson Trust

Tesco Groundworks

Coventry Church (Municipal) Charity

Expert Citizens

Coventry Masonic Fund

Central Hall Coventry

Mill Gardens, Warwick

Arnold Clark Community Fund

Coventry & District Charitable Trust

Access to the Free Bus Pass Support scheme, enabling thousands of member journeys

Members, audiences and our community supporters

These contributions have played a vital role in supporting our creative programmes, member access, and community events.

Photography by Mandip Seehra, Fai Banks, and staff & members of Underground Lights

**“I used to  
think I wasn’t  
any good at  
anything...  
but now,  
well now  
I’m a  
star!”**



**UNDERGROUND LIGHTS**

England & Wales - Charity number 1179553

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# Accounts

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# ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024

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WITH THANKS  
TO OUR  
SUPPORTERS

## INTRODUCTION

### Trustees Report for the year ended 31st March 2024

The trustees of Underground Lights present their report with Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2024. The trustees confirm that the Annual Report and financial statements comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).

### Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Status:	Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) Charity number 1179553 (Registered 14th August 2018)
Registered Address:	c/o Belgrade Theatre, Belgrade Square, Corporation Street, Coventry CV1 1GS
Trustees who served the charity during the period were as follows:	Mandip Seehra (Chair) Tracy Villiers Nadine Holdsworth Benedict Davenport Jan Winter Sophie Hall (from July 2023)
Staff:	Beth Fiducia-Brookes, Artistic Director/CEO Alisha Kadir, Membership Manager Liz Churchill, Drama Facilitator Hayley Harman, Projects & Activities Assistant Wes Finch, Sessional Facilitator Frankie Robson, Sessional Facilitator Becky Eccleston, Finance Officer Chris Campell, IT Officer
Volunteers:	Francesca Rogers (Volunteer Executive Assistant) Cecelia Stower (Drama) Susan Sadler (Drama) Thomas Smith (Creative Cafe)
Independent examiner:	Alan Rylett

## STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Underground Lights is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. It became a constituted organisation on 23rd March 2018 and a registered charity on 14th August 2018.

The trustees as a group are responsible for the overall governance of the Charity and the constitution requires there to be a minimum of three trustees. The trustees are not remunerated for their work. They aim to meet at least four times per year and are responsible for all major financial and strategic decisions, and the establishment of major policies.

Apart from the first trustees, every trustee is appointed for a term of three years. In selecting trustees the board has regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the Charity. Our commitment to being a member-led organisation means that it is important to recruit individuals to our board who have experience of mental health issues and/or homelessness.

Upon receiving an expression of interest in becoming a trustee, individuals are invited to discuss the organisation and the role further by telephone or face to face either with the Artistic Director/CEO or a member of the board. They are then sent an application to complete and meet more formally with the Chair of trustees. The role and responsibilities of a trustee are discussed in more detail at this point. If both parties wish to pursue the application a new trustee is appointed by resolution at a convened meeting of the board of trustees. New trustees are required to sign a Code of Conduct and are given a pack containing our constitution, strategic plan, latest annual report and accounts and links to the Charity Commission's advice relating to the roles and responsibilities of trustees.

Day-to-day management of the Charity has been delegated to the Artistic Director/CEO. The Artistic Director/CEO is supported by a Membership Manager, Drama Facilitator, Projects & Activities Assistant, Finance Officer, IT Officer Sessional Facilitators/Assistants and volunteers who are in turn responsible for the delivery of our work.

Grant applications prior to consideration by the trustees are handled by the Artistic Director/CEO.

## OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Underground Lights is an independent community theatre charity that is run for and by people experiencing homelessness and/or mental health issues.

Our charitable purpose is for the public benefit, the relief of those in need, in particular but not exclusively, people experiencing homelessness and/or mental distress in the Coventry, Warwickshire and surrounding area through the provision of drama/performing arts workshops and other activities or forms of training/support.

The trustees confirm that in setting objectives and planning activities, they have given due consideration to general guidance by the Charity Commission relating to public benefit and in particular to its supplementary public benefit guidance.

Our vision is to be a safe and inspiring creative community, for people on the margins of society, that is owned and run by us.

### THE MISSION OF THE CHARITY IS AS FOLLOWS:

- To bring together people experiencing (or at risk of experiencing) homelessness, mental or emotional distress, trauma, social isolation and marginalisation.
- To develop confidence, skills and friendship networks by providing creative opportunities and empowering people to explore their own creative identities through theatre, dance, poetry and music.
- To support each other and create a safe and caring space where people can belong.
- To challenge assumptions and stereotypes through the creation of high-quality artistic work.



**Our vision is to be a safe  
and inspiring creative  
community, for people  
on the margins of  
society, that is owned  
and run by us.**

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

This year saw the fruition of our largest performance project to date; members co-created all elements of 'Lights Up!' - building and designing the set and costumes with FabLab, and creating the play's characters and narrative. They also created songs, undertook shadowing opportunities and performed on the B2 Stage alongside the singers from The Choir With No Name.

Underground Lights was shortlisted for both the Arts and Homelessness Project of the Year 2023, and for Co-Creation Champion of the Year 2023 in the First Annual Arts & Homelessness International Awards.

### SUMMER 2023

#### Creative Groups

- Drama groups worked on the Lights Up! Project - developing ideas, characters and scenes. One drama group was led by Liz, the other by Beth, both were supported by Hayley. The sessions took place at the Belgrade Theatre. Drama Groups performed a brilliant end of term work-in-progress performance.

Wonderful audience feedback:

- "Enjoyed the spirit of unity throughout the scenes. The important messages within the main journey theme: safety, our reliance of service (serving one another), the importance of happiness"

- "Enjoyed everything. The joint effort. Motivation."
- "Absolutely wonderful"

#### Creative Café workshops

- Ran at Central Hall with Alisha and Hayley, and song writing workshops with Wes.
- Guest facilitator Ben Jones ran a merry music-making session. Our members reported feeling: "Joyful", "Bright and delightful", and "Lifted spirits" after the session.
- The two Open Mic events went well and offered members a great opportunity to perform and/or enjoy watching others' creativity on stage! Open Mic June highlights for the audience were: "all of it", "Seeing the growing confidence and mutual support of all the performers", and the "humour", "poetry reading" and "fun"!

#### Recovery & Wellbeing Academy online workshop

- 'Explore Strength Through Drama'. Some great feedback words at the end of the workshop: Inspiring, Supported, Community, Connection, Experience, Relaxed, Positive.



## OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

- Nominated for the Creative Champion Award as part of the Cov Cares Awards
- Trips for members involved watching two shows at the Belgrade Theatre: 'Drive Your Plough Over the Bones of the Dead' and 'Big Aunty' - lots of positive feedback from UL members, "Best things I've seen at the Belgrade", "A cocktail of emotion", "Really liked the choreography and voices and choices of songs were fantastic", "The staging was fantastic"
- Celebrated [#SmallCharityWeek](#) with the Big Lunch



"I really enjoyed the poetry and spoken word - some really powerful and moving material delivered with care and passion."

Its amazing to see the community spirit and how accommodating everyone is to each other."

"This helped me during a difficult time - boost of spirits"

### OPEN MIC FEEDBACK

## ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

### AUTUMN 2023

#### Creative Groups

- Drama Groups - both groups continued to work well being led by Beth and Liz. Throughout the term, both groups came together for joint rehearsals so they could continue developing the Lights Up! production.
- Creative Café – Hayley and Wes, with Alisha’s support throughout the term. The two Open Mic events went really well.
- Backstage Workshops at FabLab - Costume and Prop making workshops. Our members have had a wonderful time and created fantastic pieces for the Lights Up! production.



Underground Lights | FabLab Backstage  
Workshops



I love to be here with all of  
you My human friends and  
love to live amidst My eternal  
family of remarkable people.

We are one yesterday, today,  
forever.

Thank you for your great  
show that uplifts the heart”

OPEN MIC FEEDBACK



## OTHER ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

### “Including ‘Send a Smile’ Exhibition Tour”

- Arts & Homelessness International and Underground Lights toured the ‘Send a Smile’ exhibition across England, visiting cities including Plymouth, Manchester, London, and Maidenhead, with accompanying workshops at schools and homeless centres amplifying its reach and impact on an international scale. In the Spring, Hayley and Beth delivered workshops at Harnall House Lighthouse and Blue Coat School.
- Mid-Point Fest saw our Artistic Director Beth, and Cecelia one of our volunteers, speak about Underground Lights’ work. Hosted BA Drama Applied Theatre and Education (DATE) RCSSD Placement student.

#### Autumn Term Reflections

- UL Volunteer Susan was awarded Volunteer of the Month VAC Coventry.
- Belgrade Theatre Tech Shadowing undertaken for 3 UL members.
- ‘I, Daniel Blake’ – Beth chaired the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry’s post-show Q&A with cast members, Bryony Corrigan, David Nellist, and Micky Cochrane, Coventry
- Foodbank and Central England Law Centre. The discussion was thoughtful, with great questions from the audience, and the panel shared the incredible work they do in supporting people and bringing about change, and they ended by asking people to be allies.



## SPRING 2024

### Creative Groups

- Drama Groups –Lights Up!
  - Two successful performances of Lights Up! Funded by Arts Council England, Tudor Trust, and supported by the Belgrade Theatre. Cast, backstage support and songs by UL Members. Singers from The Choir with No Name Coventry.
  - BSL interpreter part-funded by NSUN.
- Creative Café – Both Open Mic performances went well with members enjoying themselves. Songs created with Wes.
- Improbable Open Space Event: If inclusion is needed for excellence why aren't more people taking it seriously?



Participant feedback:

**"The Lights Up Project has changed my life"**

**"the organisation understands the necessity of consistency, trust and forgiveness when working with vulnerable adults"**



# Lights Up!

If inclusion is needed for excellence,  
why aren't enough people taking it seriously?



Brought to you by

UNDERGROUND  
LIGHTS COMMUNITY  
THEATRE

## LIGHTS UP!

### Lights Up! Staff Feedback

Lights Up! was an example of excellence in accessible theatre. Often creative excellence is defined by the success of an end product, the scale or reach or artistic quality of a piece, however working in participatory arts this definition becomes much more complex and difficult to measure by traditional standards.

Lights Up! was not only a standout piece of high quality theatre in a professional setting, performing two shows to large audiences, with production value and all the artistic and emotive hallmarks of a 'real show' - but more importantly this was process driven creative work, supporting marginalised, underrepresented or differently abled artists to co-produce theatre. Members devised stories in response to their own life experience through carefully considered workshop practices, played characters drafted by their own imaginations, were able to

contribute to lighting, sound and movement decisions, had the confidence to edit and redraft their ideas, had opportunities to shadow backstage roles and understand the mechanics of a professional theatre, designed and built props, costumes and set, co-wrote songs based on their personal challenges and worked in a professional setting with production artists. This was only made possible by the care-centred and compassionate approach in all that Underground Lights does. On an almost intrinsic level, the organisation understands the necessity of consistency, trust and forgiveness when working with vulnerable adults.

The Improbable Theatre Open Space event was a highlight for our members who were able to attend. They found it thought-provoking and very accessible for them. Addressing the theme of excellence and inclusion felt achievable in the environment that was created.





**Participant feedback:**

**"Underground Lights, light up peoples lives' and celebrate the true meaning of Christmas. Giving disadvantaged people a voice through drama and supporting homeless people not just for Xmas but for life.**

**They understand the value of people. Their unique relationship with the Belgrade theatre puts people and talents to the forefront."**

---

**MARIE, UL MEMBER  
TECH SHADOWING  
FEEDBACK**

## ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

### Lights Up! Participant Feedback:

- "The Lights Up! project has changed my life. I enjoyed knowing that people gained more confidence and that everything came together really well including the lighting and sound"
- "I enjoyed the performance after all our hard work. All the audience that came was great. It was a success for us and the audience"
- "I always come away with new skills and admiration for the cast and crew"

### Lights Up! Audience Feedback:

- "Very good, different elements to the show such as laughter, singing, & storytelling it was very well put together"
- "The choir singing from the upstairs bit of the theatre. It was surprising and immersive"
- "Very well done to all on your performance was amazed that everything was done by the cast"
- "Keep on making theatre"

## OTHER ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- Two Warwick University MA students were on placement with us this term, supporting the Creative Café sessions and delivering a workshop as part of their assessment.
- Poetry Workshop at Social Prescribing Day Belgrade Theatre, Coventry.
- ChiliMint filmed two short promotional films for UL - one of which was a member's testimony.



## CASE STUDY, UL MEMBER - MARCH 2024

### What do you enjoy about Underground Lights?

- I like seeing the different circumstances of the people there. You can see that it's organised to help people. Something to help build confidence and self-esteem. It's beneficial.

### What was Lights Up! like?

- It was different, interesting to learn about. I'd say I was interested in how the play would pan out, to see if it would be a success. I watched the video back last week and it was quite entertaining and much better than I anticipated. There are some great actors in the group. It was nice. [...] I found Lights Up! supported lots of people in the group with their different circumstances. Seeing it be beneficial to others. It was nice to see how mellow the people were who ran it. How understanding they were.

### Have you noticed any changes in yourself or others since joining Underground Lights? What are these changes?

- With the UL it's seeing how it provides support to others to the point where they can help you there, you know, they will. I just like to try and help the other people. It's nice to see people with problems trying to get on with their life [...]

- If anyone needs support, feeling under pressure there is always someone to talk to. If I needed to confide in someone, I know I could do that. It's a nice, safe, contained environment. I know the support is there for me. I can express my feelings and emotions through physical activity.

### How has Underground Lights affected your wellbeing?

- It made me realise that there is support around and that the actual group is good for us. Not just the talking, the physical activity. There's some nice people there. It's a different way of expressing your feelings.[...]. It was good to learn and express my feelings through drama. A different way of coping mechanism. I feel like I'm on a positive, step by step, I feel optimistic.

### Is there anything else you'd like to share?

- I just like to put in a good word for everyone there. They're really friendly and considerate. It's been a different part of learning. I won't forget UL.

## GENERAL UPDATES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

### In-Kind support from the Belgrade Theatre -

- Our relationships with the Belgrade Theatre continues to be a supportive one where we are able to use workshop and office space and ad hoc staff support.

### Staffing Changes

- Beth became our Artistic Director/CEO at the start of the summer 2023 term.
- Liz Churchill joined us at the start of the summer 2023 term.

### Training -

- A variety of training opportunities have been accessed this year:
- Our membership manager, Alisha, attended First Aid Training and 'Suicide Prevention' Training.
- Artistic Director, Beth has attended NCVO training - Charity Finance for Non-Financial Managers, 'Suicide Awareness' Training by The Kaleidoscope Plus Group, 'Trauma Awareness' session by the Recovery Academy, and 'DBS Eligibility' Training by CAVA.
- 3 members of the team have also attended 'Trauma Informed Training' with Kazzum.
- Liz has attended Suicide Prevention training with Schema.
- Regular staff meetings and trainings take place throughout the terms.

- Outreach workshop with Inini delivered by Hayley and UL volunteers went positively.

### Strategy -

- The Core Strategic Group is operating as a drop-in space with all members, staff and volunteers welcome to join and feed into the discussion about UL and our future, meetings have been ad hoc but well attended.
- DASH Arts joined us for speech writing workshops which members enjoyed. Two members and a staff member had their speeches included in Dash Arts presentation evening in Manchester, and lines from other speeches by members were included in the Podcasts DASH Arts created as part of this project.



## GENERAL UPDATES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- Coventry Crisis closed, many UL members, UL staff and trustees attended their Farewell event.
- Send a Smile 2024 exhibition tour launched at the Old Diorama Arts Centre in London, December 2024, and toured England visiting Plymouth, Coventry, Maidenhead, and Manchester. The exhibition displays 250 postcards created by homeless artists from around the world. Accompanying the exhibition tour are community workshops. UL have supported Arts & Homelessness International with the tour and running two workshops in Coventry at Blue Coat School and Harnall Lighthouse.
- Members took part in a painting workshop with Paul Lemmon as part of Coventry Biennial of Contemporary Art, thanks to Warwick Institute of Engagement.





**Underground Lights is such a special place,  
No matter your background, your culture, your gender, or  
race,  
You're supported and challenged  
With creativity, and care,  
Something special lives here,  
Something that's quite rare.**

**In this room you're free to roam,  
To be yourself where the people feel like home.**

**Drama and movement, music and song,  
We are all human beings, and sometimes we can get it  
wrong,**

**But most of the time, here, I think we get it right,  
Thank you for bringing me into an Underground world that  
you've, through performance, kindness, and humour,  
illuminated with Light.**

---

**by RCSSD Placement  
Student Amy**

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

### Annual Reports 2023 - 2024

During the period April 2023 – March 2024, Underground Lights received total income of £13,527 including donations from individuals and gift aid of £1,415. Total expenditure for the same period was 65,534 which meant the balance held at the end of this period were 29,624. During the year the LightsUp! Project funded much of the charities' activities.

Reserves are held to cover 3 months' running costs in case of future unsuccessful fundraising.

In preparing the financial statements the trustees believe that Underground Lights will continue as a going concern until April 2025.

This report was approved by the trustees on 17/10/2024 and signed on their behalf by:

**MANDIP SINGH SEEHRA**



**Chair of Trustees**

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

<b>STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES</b> <b>Year ended 31st March 2024</b>	Unrestricted fund	Restricted fund	Year ended 31/03/24 Total Funds	Year ended 31/03/23 Total Funds
<b>Income</b>				
Donations	1,415	-	1,415	1,303
Charitable Activities	2,927	7,700	10,627	60,515
Other Income	1,485	-	1,485	500
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>5,827</b>	<b>7,700</b>	<b>13,527</b>	<b>62,318</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Staffing Costs	3,100	46,496	49,596	31,935
Volunteers' costs	97	158	255	88
Operational/ Activity	366	11,040	11,406	3,119
Publicity / Marketing	-	1,243	1,243	781
Other Administration	584	2,450	3,034	2,090
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>4,147</b>	<b>61,387</b>	<b>65,534</b>	<b>38,013</b>
<b>NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE)</b>	<b>1680</b>	<b>(53,687)</b>	<b>(52,007)</b>	<b>24,305</b>
<b>Total funds brought forward at 31st March 2023</b>	<b>21,758</b>	<b>59,873</b>	<b>81,631</b>	<b>57,326</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>23,031</b>	<b>6,186</b>	<b>29,624</b>	<b>81,631</b>

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

### BALANCE SHEET

Year ended 31st March 2024

	Unrestricted fund	Restricted fund	Year ended 31/03/24 Total Funds	Year ended 31/03/23 Total Funds
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Cash at Bank	24,643	38,062	62,705	82,261
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>24,643</b>	<b>38,062</b>	<b>62,705</b>	<b>82,261</b>
Creditors: amounts falling due within One year	(1,205)	(31,876)	<b>(33,081)</b>	(630)
<b>Net current assets/(liabilities)</b>	<b>23,438</b>	<b>6,186</b>	<b>29,624</b>	<b>81,631</b>
<b>FUNDS</b>				
Unrestricted fund	-	-	23,438	21,758
Restricted fund	-	-	6,186	59,873
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>29,624</b>	<b>81,631</b>

For the financial year ending 31st March 2024 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

#### Charity Trustees Responsibilities:

- The members have not required the charity to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476; and
- The charity trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The financial statements on pages were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue and signed on their behalf by:

**MANDIP SINGH SEEHRA 17/10/2024**



**Chair of Trustees**

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### **Basis of preparing the financial statements**

The financial statements of the CIO have been prepared using the accruals basis together with the Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities 2011.

### **Taxation**

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

### **Fund Accounting**

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

### **Volunteer help**

The value of any volunteer help received is not included in the financial statements but is described in the trustees' report.

### **Trustees' Remuneration and Benefits**

No Member received any remuneration or other benefits for being a trustee.

Trustees' expenses - No expenses were paid to trustees

### **Restricted Funds**

Restricted funds held at 31st March 2024

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

### EXPENDITURE

Year ended 31st March 2024

	Balance B/F	Received	Spent	Balance C/F
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Events and Workshops	1,440	-	(1,440)	-
Core salaries	30,877	-	(30,877)	-
Wellbeing grant	26,971	-	(26,971)	-
Events and Workshops	-	6,500	(1,812)	4,688
Core salaries	-	1,200	(189)	1,011
Wellbeing grant	585	-	(98)	487
<b>Total</b>	<b>59,873</b>	<b>7,700</b>	<b>(61,387)</b>	<b>6,186</b>

### Restricted funding received from:

- A&HI - Creative Cafe and Open Mic events
- Cole Charitable Trust – Member Training and Up-skilling
- Heart of England Charitable Foundation - Creative Cafes and Open Mic Events
- Tudor Trust - Salaries and Wellbeing grant

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

### STAFFING

	This year	Last year
Gross Salaries		
Gross Salaries	48,743	31,163
Employer's NICs	2,698	597
Employment Allowance	(2,698)	(597)
Employer's Pension	853	772
<b>Total</b>	<b>49,596</b>	<b>31,935</b>

The average number of employees over the year was 5 (FTE in 2023:2).

### DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS

There were no debtors or pre-payments.

### CREDITORS AND ACCRUALS

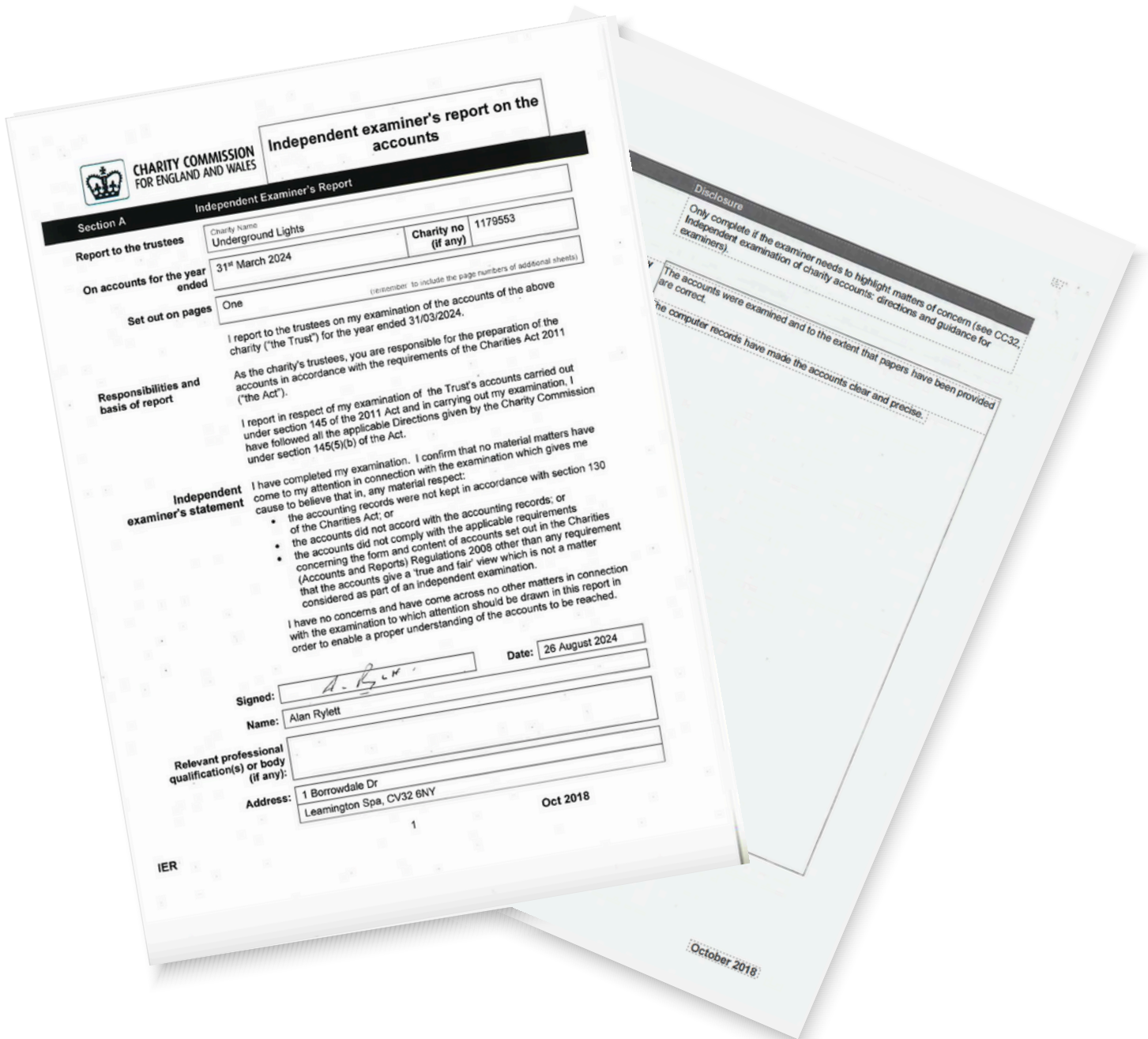
£

Income in Advance	31,876
Room Hire	407
Pension, PAYE and NICs	798
<b>Total</b>	<b>33,081</b>

### RELATED PARTIES

There were no transactions with related parties

# FINANCIAL REVIEW



# FINANCIAL REVIEW

**Financial Review**

During the period April 2023 – March 2024, Underground Lights received total income of £13,527 including donations from individuals and gift aid of £1,415. Total expenditure for the same period was 65,534 which meant the balance held at the end of this period were 29,624. During the year the LightsUp! Project funded much of the charities' activities. Reserves are held to cover 3 months' running costs in case of future unsuccessful fundraising.

In preparing the financial statements the trustees believe that Underground Lights will continue as a going concern until April 2025.

This report was approved by the trustees on 17.10.2024 and signed on their behalf by:

*Mandip Seehra*  
Mandip Seehra, Acting Chair of Trustees

**BALANCE SHEET**  
For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Unrestricted fund	Restricted funds	Year ended 31.03.24 Total Funds	Year ended 31.03.23 Total Funds
Current Assets				
Cash at Bank	24,643	38,062	62,705	82,261
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>24,643</b>	<b>38,062</b>	<b>62,705</b>	<b>82,261</b>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(1,205)	(31,876)	(33,081)	(630)
<b>Net current assets/(liabilities)</b>	<b>23,438</b>	<b>6,186</b>	<b>29,624</b>	<b>81,631</b>
<b>FUNDS</b>				
Unrestricted fund			23,438	21,758
Restricted fund			6,186	59,873
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>			<b>29,624</b>	<b>81,631</b>

The financial statements on pages were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue and signed on their behalf by:

Name: Mandip Singh Seehra Date: 17.10.2024

*Mandip Seehra*  
PAGE 18 OF 20



## WITH THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS



**UNDERGROUND LIGHTS WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR TIME AND MONEY TO HELP US CONTINUE TO DO OUR WORK, AND PARTICULARLY:**

Arts Council England

29th May 1961 Charitable Trust

The Belgrade Theatre

NSUN

Tudor Trust

ChilliMint

Coventry City of Culture

Including photographs by Nicola Young and Mandip Seehra and members of the team.



When members did a 'stars sparkled on me when...' exercise the responses often related to the Creative Umbrella work:

"Watching the Digital Divide film on Film Night"

"Having my voice heard in the HOME Festival Steering Group"

"Flash Mob"

"Watching the Rio film at the Summit (postcards project)"



"Being able to share and voice my feelings at the festival which was from all around the world".

## EVALUATION FOR GROUNDWORKS

### Creative Umbrella

The Creative Umbrella supported a number of wrap-around events and activities during the run of Cardboard Citizens' Ruff Tuff Cream Puff Estate Agency. Funding enabled UL staff members to upskill and support two participants on technical placements during the show and three other participants on comms placements with the Belgrade, which resulted in a range of work including biogs, interviews and a short film about the transformation of UL.

Funding also increased capacity within the team to develop and support other wrap around events including Cardboard Citizens' Resistance Theatre day, the Arts and Homelessness International Summit, Open Mic event, Film Night and the Send a Smile Global postcards project (initiated and developed by two members of the UL collective). These wrap around events enabled UL to provide direct and regular support to 24 people with lived experience of homelessness and/or mental health issues. Sixteen people with lived experience of homelessness who engaged with these events and activities have now signed up to become UL members and are keen to continue exploring their creativity and develop their skills.

**UNDERGROUND LIGHTS**

England & Wales - Charity number 1179553

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# Accounts

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UNDERGROUND  
LIGHTS  
COMMUNITY  
THEATRE

Underground Lights

Annual Report and Financial Statements  
for the year ended March 2023

Charity Number: 1179553

## Underground Lights

### Trustees Report for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023

The trustees of Underground Lights present their report with Financial Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. The trustees confirm that the Annual Report and financial statements comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).

#### Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Status: Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) Number: 1179553

Registered Address: c/o Belgrade Theatre, Corporation Street, Coventry, CV1 1GS

Trustees who served the charity during the period were as follows:

Mandip Seehra (Acting Chair since Oct 2022)

Jonathan Chilvers (Chair until July 2022)

Tracy Villiers

Nadine Holdsworth (from April 2022)

Benedict Davenport (from April 2022)

Jan Winter (from April 2022)

Colin Tysall (Resigned July 2022)

Staff:

Emma Ormerod, Artistic Director/CEO (until December 2022)

Beth Fiducia-Brookes, Lead Drama Facilitator (Acting Artistic Director/CEO September 2021 – March 2023)

Jessie Dutton, Membership Manager (from April until December 2022)

Wes Finch, Sessional Facilitator

Frankie Robson, Sessional Facilitator

Hayley Harman, Sessional Assistant (until September 2021), Projects and Activities Assistant (from May 2022)

Alisha Kadir, Sessional Assistant (from April 22 until July 2022)  
Membership Manager (from September 2022)

Becky Eccleston, Finance Officer

Chris Campbell, IT Officer from January 2023

Volunteers:

Malcolm Cave (Creative Café)

Francesca Rogers (Volunteer Executive Assistant)

Independent examiner of accounts: Alan Rylett

### Structure, governance and management

Underground Lights is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. It became a constituted organisation on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2018 and a registered charity on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

The trustees as a group are responsible for the overall governance of the Charity and the constitution requires there to be a minimum of three trustees. The trustees are not remunerated for their work. They aim to meet at least four times per year and are responsible for all major financial and strategic decisions, and the establishment of major policies.

Apart from the first trustees, every trustee is appointed for a term of three years. In selecting trustees the board has regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the Charity. Our commitment to being a member-led organisation means that it is important to recruit individuals to our board who have experience of mental health issues and/or homelessness.

Upon receiving an expression of interest in becoming a trustee, individuals are invited to discuss the organisation and the role further by telephone or face to face either with the Artistic Director/CEO or a member of the board. They are then sent an application to complete and meet more formally with the Chair of trustees. The role and responsibilities of a trustee are discussed in more detail at this point. If both parties wish to pursue the application a new trustee is appointed by resolution at a convened meeting of the board of trustees. New trustees are required to sign a Code of Conduct and are given a pack containing our constitution, strategic plan, latest annual report and accounts and links to the Charity Commission's advice relating to the roles and responsibilities of trustees.

Day-to-day management of the Charity has been delegated to the Artistic Director/CEO. The Artistic Director/CEO is supported by a Lead Drama Facilitator, Projects & Activities Assistant, Finance Officer, Sessional Facilitators/Assistants and volunteers who are in turn responsible for the delivery of our work.

Grant applications prior to consideration by the trustees are handled by the Artistic Director/CEO.

### Objectives and activities

Underground Lights is an independent community theatre charity that is run for and by people experiencing homelessness and/or mental health issues.

Our charitable purpose is for the public benefit, the relief of those in need, in particular but not exclusively, people experiencing homelessness and/or mental distress in the Coventry, Warwickshire and surrounding area through the provision of drama/performing arts workshops and other activities or forms of training/support.

The trustees confirm that in setting objectives and planning activities, they have given due consideration to general guidance by the Charity Commission relating to public benefit and in particular to its supplementary public benefit guidance.

Our vision is to be a safe and inspiring creative community, for people on the margins of society, that is owned and run by us.

The mission of the Charity is as follows:

- To bring together people experiencing (or at risk of experiencing) homelessness, mental or emotional distress, trauma, social isolation and marginalisation.
- To develop confidence, skills and friendship networks by providing creative opportunities and empowering people to explore their own creative identities through theatre, dance, poetry and music.
- To support each other and create a safe and caring space where people can belong.
- To challenge assumptions and stereotypes through the creation of high-quality artistic work.

### Achievements and performance

The charity managed a number of long-term staff sicknesses and turn-over this year. Despite these challenges we have continued to deliver our activities and support members with other activities, including the Professional Development workshops by Arts & Homelessness International, and member well-being, signposting and referral.

We were also delighted to be nominated for Best Practice in Volunteer Management - Voluntary Action Coventry 2022.

### Summer 2022

#### **Creative Groups**

- Drama Groups – Values Project explored our Underground Lights core values: connectivity, creativity, community-led, and compassion. The two drama groups explored Frantic Assembly techniques and developed a range of pieces from movement to devised work around these themes. The sessions were led by Beth with Alisha and Hayley. The pieces were performed back in the B2 Belgrade Theatre. Warwick University provided a photographer who captured the sharing.
- Creative Café workshops – ran at Central Hall led by Ben (first half of term) and Frankie & Brendan (second half of term), and supported by Alisha and Hayley.
- The two *Open Mic* events went well and offer members a great opportunity to perform and/ or enjoy watching others creativity on stage!

## Other activities and achievements

- Silk Painting Workshop – was delivered as well as additional time in the drama sessions to allow members to create their own silk painting banners inspired by the Send a Smile Post Card project for the City of Culture Parade. This was also open to Over50s Belgrade group and Crisis.
- City of Culture Parade – members were supported to attend two rehearsals for the end of the City of Culture parade. Alisha and Beth supported rehearsal attendance, Alisha supported the parade. A number of members took part including under CWNN and Crisis.
- Recovery Academy: The planned 4week online course for the summer term was cancelled due to staff illness and limited capacity. We have maintained the relationships with the Recover Academy and hope to rekindle these workshops in the future.

## Autumn 2022

### Creative Groups

- Drama Groups –theme for the term was ‘Being Human’. Beth and Hayley led the workshops with support from Alisha on site. One group explored the theme using puppetry inspired by members’ interests. The latter group looked at techniques used by different practitioners including Brecht. The two groups came together for a great end of term sharing in B2.
- Creative Café – the end of first half of term saw Ben leading the sessions, and the second half of term which was led by Hayley and Wes, with Alisha’s support throughout the term. The two *Open Mic* events went really well

*“Extremely well done to all. Dedication 10/10. Community spirit 10/10. Friendship and Care 10/10. Inclusion 10/10. Spectacle 10/10.”*

*“Massive well done, wonderful as always to see what UL members have been up to. Great teamwork!”*

*“It was entertaining, funny in places and made some good points”*

*“It help [sic] a bit somewhere on the mind, health and heart”*

*“[Liked the] Confidence to get up and sing, feeling of being welcome, would like to get involved”*

*“Collective Underground Lights song was very meaningful especially regarding inclusion and uplifting us”*

## Other activities and achievements

- The December *Open Mic* also saw the launch of the Collective Book (City of Culture Legacy project through Warwick University) which involved a number of our members - it was wonderful to see members react to seeing their work in print.
- Supported Arts & Homelessness International with their Professional Development workshops, which members and others attended.

## Spring 2023

### Creative Groups

- Drama Groups – sessions led by Beth and Hayley, with Alisha on site to provide member support. The two groups came together for a great end of term work-in-progress sharing in B2. The Belgrade supported by taking photos and posting on social media about the event. *Lights Up!* – members have decided on the theme of 'Journey'.
- Creative Café – Both Open Mic performances went well with members enjoying themselves.

### Other activities and achievements

- Lights Up! Planning and preparation: dates for the performances at the Belgrade Theatre were agreed, freelance producer advertised for and additional funding explored.
- Cosy Creatives – supported Johnnie one of our members to co-deliver two poetry writing workshops as part of the City of Culture Legacy funding, Poems to compiled into a poetry collection printed booklet.
- Wellbeing – UL and Crisis supported members to attend Malcolm's funeral and host teas and coffees at Methodist Central Hall. A Creative Café session was cancelled to accommodate this.
- Two Warwick University MA students were placement with us for four weeks supporting the Creative Café sessions and delivered a workshop as part of their assessment.
- One placement student from Royal Central School of Speech and Drama (RCSSD) joined us for up to 7 hours a week for 8 weeks to support our funding applications.

“

"It was my pleasure to work with such a **hard-working team**, and be able to see what a **small organisation** can do for and with its members. I felt cared for as a volunteer and I know that this stands for how work is **co-created** with the members, lots of care in the creative space (as I saw first hand at the end of term showcase). Working with UL as a fundraising volunteer felt **safe, personal, and meaningful.**"

**SARAH, VOLUNTEER**

UNDERGROUND  
LIGHTS COMMUNITY  
THEATRE

[WWW.UNDERGROUNDLIGHTS.ORG](http://WWW.UNDERGROUNDLIGHTS.ORG)

## General Updates and Achievements

- *Members and Outreach* – We have now worked through our waiting list and are keen to recruit more members. We are planning to visit Inini to share what we do with them. We are running a one-off video call workshop as part of the Recovery Academy planned for summer 2023.
- *Strategy* - The Core Strategic Group made up of members have met with a view to regular meetings in the future.
- *Belgrade Theatre* - Our relationships with the Belgrade Theatre continues to be a supportive one where we are able to use workshop and office space and ad hoc staff support.
- *Lights Up!* has been postponed until 2023 - Feb 2024
- *Staffing Changes:*
  - Jo left in December 2022, and previous volunteer Chris Campbell stepped back into the role.
  - Alisha covered the Membership Manager for the Autumn Term and took on this role permanently
  - Beth was Acting Artistic Director/CEO during Autumn 22 / Spring 23 terms
  - Hayley had taken on additional hours which led to work for the Belgrade.
- *Training* – A variety of training opportunities have been accessed this year.
  - Alisha attended First Aid Training and fed back on 'Suicide Prevention' Training.
  - Beth has attended NCVO training - charity finance for non-financial managers, 'Suicide Awareness' Training by The Kaleidoscope Plus Group, 'Trauma Awareness' session by the Recovery Academy, and 'DBS Eligibility' Training by CAVA.
  - Beth and Alisha have also attended 'Trauma Informed Training' Part 1, and Alisha part 2 with Kazzum.
  - Hayley and Beth attended the second day of A&HI's Legislative Theatre training with Katy Rubin.

## Thanks to our supporters

Underground Lights would like to thank all the people who have given their time and money to help us continue our work, and particularly:

The Belgrade Theatre

Tudor Trust

Heart of England Community Foundation

Coventry City of Culture Trust

Arts and Homelessness International

29th May 1961 Charitable Trust

Coventry Improv Society

## Financial Review

During the period April 2022 – March 2023, Underground Lights received total income of £62,318 including donations from individuals and gift aid of £1,303. Total expenditure for the same period was £38,013 which meant the balance held at the end of this period was £81,631. Of this, £59,873 was restricted for use on the LightsUp! Project, salaries, workshops or training.

Reserves are held to cover 3 months' running costs in case of future unsuccessful fundraising.

In preparing the financial statements the trustees believe that Underground Lights will continue as a going concern until April 2024.

This report was approved by the trustees on 19.10.23 and signed on their behalf by:



Mandip Seehra, Acting Chair of Trustees



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name  
Underground Lights

On accounts for the year ended

31<sup>st</sup> March 2023

Charity no  
(if any)

1179553

Set out on pages

One

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, 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 which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

Signed:

*A. Rylett*

Date:

27 September 2023

Name:

Alan Rylett

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

Address:

1 Borrowdale Dr

Leamington Spa, CV32 6NY

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Unrestricted fund	Restricted funds	Year ended 31.03.23 Total Funds	Year ended 31.03.22 Total Funds
<b>Income</b>				
Donations	1,303	-	1,303	2,216
Charitable Activities	11,440	49,075	60,515	39,500
Other Income	500	-	500	21,115
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>13,243</b>	<b>49,075</b>	<b>62,318</b>	<b>62,831</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Staffing Costs	4,112	27,823	31,935	41,004
Volunteers' costs	64	24	88	390
Operational / Activity	993	2,126	3,119	2,190
Publicity / Marketing	731	50	781	701
Other Administration	1,909	181	2,090	3,418
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>7,809</b>	<b>30,204</b>	<b>38,013</b>	<b>47,703</b>
<b>NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE)</b>	<b>5,434</b>	<b>18,871</b>	<b>24,305</b>	<b>15,128</b>
Total funds brought forward from previous year	16,324	41,002	57,326	42,198
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>21,758</b>	<b>59,873</b>	<b>81,631</b>	<b>57,326</b>

**BALANCE SHEET**  
For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Unrestricted fund	Restricted funds	Year ended 31.03.23 Total Funds	Year ended 31.03.22 Total Funds
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Cash at Bank	22,388	59,873	82,261	57,439
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>22,388</b>	<b>59,873</b>	<b>82,261</b>	<b>57,439</b>
Creditors: amounts falling due within One year	(630)	-	(630)	(113)
 Net current assets/(liabilities)	<u>21,758</u>	<u>59,873</u>	<u>81,631</u>	<u>57,326</u>
<b>FUNDS</b>				
Unrestricted fund			21,758	16,324
Restricted fund			59,873	41,002
 <b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>			<u>81,631</u>	<u>57,326</u>

The financial statements on pages were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue and signed on their behalf by:

Name: 

Date: 19. 10. 2023

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
For the year ended 31 March 2023

**Basis of preparing the financial statements**

The financial statements of the CIO have been prepared using the accruals basis together with the Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities 2011.

**Taxation**

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

**Fund Accounting**

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes. Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

**Volunteer help**

The value of any volunteer help received is not included in the financial statements but is described in the trustees' report.

**TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS**

No member received any remuneration or other benefits for being a trustee.

No expenses were paid to trustees. The fee for the Independent Examination was £nil.

**RESTRICTED FUNDS**

**Restricted funds held at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023**

	Balance b/f	Received	Spent	Balance c/f
Events and Workshops	3,886	7,104	(9,550)	1,440
Core salaries	36,507	15,000	(20,630)	30,877
Lights Up! Project	-	26,971	-	26,971
Wellbeing grant	609	-	(24)	585
<b>Total</b>	<b>41,002</b>	<b>49,075</b>	<b>(30,204)</b>	<b>59,873</b>

Restricted funding received from:

AHI – Creative Café and Open Mic events

Arts Centre England – Lights Up! Project

Cole Charitable Trust – Workshops

Heart of England Community Foundation – Creative Cafes and Open Mic Events

Tudor Trust – Salaries and Wellbeing grant

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONT)  
For the year ended 31 March 2023

STAFFING

	This year	Last year
Gross Salaries	31,163	39,662
Employers' NICs	597	2,428
Employment Allowance	(597)	(2,428)
Employer's Pension	772	1,342
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,935</b>	<b>41,004</b>

The average number of full-time equivalent employees was 2 (2022:2).

DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS

There were no debtors or pre-payments.

CREDITORS AND ACCRUALS

	£
Trade Creditors	559
Pension Creditor	<u>71</u>
Total	<u>630</u>

RELATED PARTIES

There were no transactions with related parties.

**UNDERGROUND LIGHTS**

England & Wales - Charity number 1179553

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# Accounts

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UNDERGROUND  
LIGHTS COMMUNITY  
THEATRE

Underground Lights

Annual Report and Financial Statements  
for the year ended March 2022

Charity Number: 1179553

## Underground Lights

### Trustees Report for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

The trustees of Underground Lights present their report with Financial Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022. The trustees confirm that the Annual Report and financial statements comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).

#### Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Status: Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)  
Charity number 1179553 (Registered 14<sup>th</sup> August 2018)

Registered Address: c/o Belgrade Theatre, Belgrade Square, Corporation Street, Coventry  
CV1 1GS

Trustees who served the charity during the period were as follows:

Jonathan Chilvers (Chair)

Tracy Villiers

Emma Marks (until December 2021)

Colin Tysall

Mandip Seehra

Staff: Emma Ormerod, Artistic Director/CEO

Beth Fiducia-Brookes, Lead Drama Facilitator

Jessie Dutton, Projects & Activities Assistant

Wes Finch, Sessional Facilitator

Frankie Robson, Sessional Facilitator

Hayley Harman, Sessional Assistant (from September 2021)

Becky Eccleston, Finance Officer (from January 2022)

Volunteers: Chris Campell (IT, Marketing and website)

Debbie Bridgeman (Creative Café)

Malcolm Cave (Creative Café)

Independent examiner of accounts: Alan Rylett

## Structure, governance and management

Underground Lights is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. It became a constituted organisation on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2018 and a registered charity on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

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- To develop confidence, skills and friendship networks by providing creative opportunities and empowering people to explore their own creative identities through theatre, dance, poetry and music.
- To support each other and create a safe and caring space where people can belong.
- To challenge assumptions and stereotypes through the creation of high-quality artistic work.

### Achievements and performance

This year we have been back fully running face-to-face activities and performances. The staff team has worked hard delivering our activities and supporting members with additional activities through the City of Culture year.

### Summer 2021

#### Core Activity: Creative Groups

- *Weekly Drama Groups:* Funded by West Midlands Combined Authority our two weekly groups explored issues of digital connection and exclusion this term. They developed a survey (data analysed by Beth and Lisa from Springboard Company Gertrude) around this. The groups also developed pieces filmed by David (a Coventry University student who has been working with the Belgrade as part of the Seaview Media Academy). Group members who weren't involved in the Cardboard Camps (and therefore able to attend end of term workshops) planned and ran a workshop around these themes on 16<sup>th</sup> July.
- *New members:* 7 new members have joined us over the course of this term.
- *Placement Students:* We have supported 3 OT students who have joined us in sessions. They have also been supported to do focused work with three members regarding issues around returning to the Belgrade/UL following the pandemic (e.g. supporting people to travel to groups, doing grounding and breathing exercises with them etc.)

*"That was new to me... a new skill... It made me feel great and happy and all that... it was filmed... Frankie, she was choreographing me, telling me how to do things... and these guys were filming it." Michael says the experience "made me feel kind of star stricken. Because, I was in HMV and this guy said to me 'I saw you on the screen, you were doing that thing about a shed, weren't you?'... I've been noticed. And then my sister said, she said she watched it and she said she enjoyed it... Lots of people have seen it."*

### Other Activities and Achievements

- *The Shed* - Frankie (sessional facilitator) has been leading this piece of work with Wes (sessional facilitator) and our freelance videographer, Ryan. Frankie and Wes ran two workshops in the spring term to record audio material. The outreach elements of the project have proved extremely challenging with regard to access to the Days Hotel. Instead the team worked with regular member Michael on a movement piece for the visual element of the film based on his own experiences of homelessness to produce a high quality piece of work entitled 'The Shed'.

#### ***Projects for City of Culture (Cardboard Citizens & Arts and Homelessness Festival)***

- *Cardboard Camps*: Hayley was employed as the Workshops Assistant for the camps; four UL members are on the Working Group for the project and eight members performed in the Cardboard Camps project in B2 at the end of July.
- *Ruff Tuff (musical)*: Emma supported the interview process for the Cardboard Citizens Choir Assistant with Choir With No Name. Thirteen of our members were supported to participate in this in the Ruff Tuff choir on the main stage, with two members on technical placements and a further three on a comms placement with the Belgrade. Wes worked as Choir Assistant for the musical.
- UL received funding from Cardboard Citizens to support these projects.
- *HOME Festival*: five UL members were on the steering group for the HOME festival. UL members have been closely involved in the events, activities and exhibitions for the festival. Beth and Hayley have curated the Send a Smile Postcard Project developed with the Belgrade Theatre and Arts and Homelessness International, Hayley and David (from AHI) have curated the Visual Art Exhibition. Several people are presenting at the Arts and Homelessness summit, running sessions as part of the summit's creative hub etc. Our films, Digital Divide and [The Shed](#) are to be shown at the festival's home grown film night.
- *Cov Biennial photography project*: we supported this project by providing materials – disposable cameras - and promoting with our members, several of whom were involved.

### Autumn 2021

#### Core Activity: Creative Groups

*Weekly drama* groups continued to run this term on the theme of transformation. At the end of term we had an informal sharing of individual work. It was also an opportunity to celebrate the incredible amount of work we have all done this year! 15 of our members performed their work. You can see the photos and read our review of the year here. You can read our 'Festive Roundup' via Mailchimp in December [here](#).

- *Waiting list* continued to grow (14 people on the waiting list).
- *Coventry and Warwickshire's Recovery Academy* and UL have connected to deliver a four workshop course over four weeks for people new to drama in November facilitated by Beth with support from volunteers Malcolm and Tracy. Average attendance 2-3 participants.
- *Film about UL*, two members Andrea & Debbie (supported by Ashford, Wes, Abbie & Emma) produced a film about UL.

When asked what her greatest highlight at Underground Lights has been, Cecelia said it was being part the Ruff Tuff. *"The Ruff Tuff Cream Puff Estate Agency. We did singing, and a little bit of acting on stage... That was the one that bonded us more together as a group. Because we were virtually sort of living here [Belgrade Theatre] It wasn't just like the ones performing. We'd got, like, Beth, and Emma, and Hayley. Although you weren't part of the show, Underground Lights was there for us... When the show was going on for the whole week and we were here for little bits of rehearsals... it became like the Belgrade was, sort of like, your home from home..."*

### Other Activities and Achievements

- Abbie (Assistant Producer at the Belgrade) working with UL one day a week this term has been working on updating our fundraising spreadsheet and identifying potential sources of income.

### Strategic

- Strategic planning briefing was shared with all trustees and staff members.
- Core Strategic Group has started forming.
- Approaches to safeguarding – as part of the Belgrade funding, Jessie and Emma had additional time to develop our safeguarding policies and procedures. This money will also cover safeguarding training for board, staff team and volunteers.

### Spring 2022

#### Core Activity: Creative Groups

- *Streams of Consciousness* – walking tour developed in our weekly drama groups, commissioned by City of Culture, with Community Producers Bengy and Tracy, project managed by Beth. Performed on the 1<sup>st</sup> April. 20 members performed and had a great time (see photos on [Facebook!](#))  
Some audience feedback:
  - *"A beautiful, atmospheric stroll through the city and the lives of the performers. Very funny and very touching".*
  - *"Really original interesting way of looking at issues around homelessness and mental health. I loved all the individual pieces, the poems the songs, rap and music. Seeing beyond the words a glimpse of each performer. The circle in the shopping centres was brave and challenging and dramatic. Well done all!"*
- *Creative Cafes* returned at Central Hall led by Ben & Hayley (first half of term) and Frankie & Brendan Leslie (freelance facilitator) (second half of term). The two *Open Mic* event popular with members and audiences alike!
- *Recovery Academy*: Emma ran a 4 week online Creating Characters course with an informal online sharing in the final week. Four people shared their creative work at this event.
- *Kairos Women Working Together*: Kairos works with women at risk of, or who are experiencing, sexual exploitation. Beth and Hayley ran a workshop on Strength with the Queen Bees group.
- *Coventry, A Relationship City*: Emma and Hayley attended this event for practitioners in February, organised by Grapevine and ran some warm up exercises for the group.
- *Strategic Planning*: Sarah Yiannoullou worked with our Core Strategy Group and ran our second strategic workshop in January.

## Staff Team Recruitment

- *Membership Manager (new role) – Jessie Dutton*
- *Projects and Activities Assistant – Hayley Harman*
- *Sessional Assistant – Alisha Kadir*
- *Website & IT Officer (8hrs per month) – Jo Packwood*
- Chris will be training Jo and then stepping back as our Website and IT volunteer.
- Paul Okey stepped back as our marketing volunteer; however Jo has InDesign experience and will be given overtime hours to produce our annual report and strategic documents. Jo was initially appointed as our fundraising volunteer and has said that she is happy to continue supporting us with this.

## Strategic

- Strategic planning process has now started. The Core Strategic Group (Emma, Tracy, Rob, Bengy, Jessie, Susan, Sim, Sarah Yiannoullou) met for an initial discussion around our purpose and values - 'Who do we think we are?' & 'Who do others think we are?'
- The first workshop was held at the end of November (Malcolm, Andrea, Cecelia, Abbie, Hannah Barker also joined this meeting). We had a positive and productive discussion about UL vision, mission and values.
- We sent out a survey to our mailing list and on social media to gather feedback. We also have statements from project partners about our work gathered as part of the Arts Council bid.
- We have connected with NSUN to discuss safeguarding approaches within user-led organisations.
- Our Springboard Company status at the Belgrade ended on March 11<sup>th</sup>, we continue to receive in kind support and to run workshops in association with the Belgrade.

*"I am most proud of myself for going to the Open Mic with my puppets which was something I always wanted to do, but never had the confidence and I could not have done without the friendships and support I got from UL. Overcoming challenges has made me want to do more with puppets and set up a workshop".*

## UL Evaluation for Groundworks

### *Mental Health Tent*

Underground Lights (UL) is a lived experience-led organisation, where all participants and many of the staff and trustees have their own personal experiences of homelessness and/or mental distress. Within this context Belgrade Theatre supported UL to develop the *Mental Health Tent* during the Cardboard Camps process as they developed a new trauma-informed model of working in which participant and staff wellbeing is at the heart of the creative process. Funding supported additional capacity for the UL staff team to provide safeguarding and pastoral support to 8 members during the Cardboard Camps and 12 members during the Ruff Tuff project. During the projects, 3 members were at high risk of suicide which required skilled and intensive partnership and safeguarding work. All members completed the project and during an evaluation

session reported that the additional support provided by UL staff members during this process had been valuable and this had enabled them to participate in the projects with Cardboard Citizens: *"It has been helpful to talk to UL staff during the camps and choir about any problems"; "Members of UL have been friendly and kind. I have had a unique opportunity and members of UL staff have supported me"*. Funding also enabled the UL Artistic Director/CEO to receive clinical supervisions, which given the high risk and demanding nature of the safeguarding work was key to maintaining her own wellbeing during this time. This in turn equipped her to support the UL staff team in their work with participants, and this enabled them to more fully engage in Cardboard Citizens' creative work. Learning and reflections from this included the development of UL's safeguarding policies, processes and training; the development of a trauma-informed approach; gathering case studies and making links with the National Survivor User Network, in order to further develop best practice and share this model with other lived experience-led organisations.

### *Creative Umbrella*

The Creative Umbrella supported a number of wrap-around events and activities during the run of Cardboard Citizens' *Ruff Tuff Cream Puff Estate Agency*. Funding enabled UL staff members to upskill and support two participants on technical placements during the show and three other participants on comms placements with the Belgrade, which resulted in a range of work including blogs, interviews and a short film about the transformation of UL. Funding also increased capacity within the team to develop and support other wrap around events including Cardboard Citizens' Resistance Theatre day, the Arts and Homelessness International Summit, Open Mic event, Film Night and the Send a Smile Global postcards project (initiated and developed by two members of the UL collective). These wrap around events enabled UL to provide direct and regular support to 24 people with lived experience of homelessness and/or mental health issues. Sixteen people with lived experience of homelessness who engaged with these events and activities have now signed up to become UL members and are keen to continue exploring their creativity and develop their skills.

When members did a 'stars sparkled on me when...' exercise the responses often related to the Creative Umbrella work:

- *"Watching the Digital Divide film on Film Night"*
- *"Having my voice heard in the HOME Festival Steering Group"*
- *"Flash Mob"*
- *"Watching the Rio film at the Summit (postcards project)"*

*"Being able to share and voice my feelings at the festival which was from all around the world"*.

## Financial Review

Our fundraising efforts were successful and we received grants from Tudor Trust, City of Culture, and Cardboard Citizens, Tesco Groundwork, Belgrade Theatre, Eveson Charitable Trust, Albert Hunt, and Arts and Homelessness International.

In preparing the financial statements the trustees believe that Underground Lights is able to continue as a going concern until April 2023. We have delayed the Arts Council funded project start date due to our Artistic Director and project leads' ill health.

This report was approved by the trustees on 5.12.2022 and signed on their behalf by:

MANDIP SINGH SEHRA



Acting Chair of Trustees

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Unrestricted fund	Restricted funds	Year ended 31.03.22 Total Funds	Year ended 31.03.21 Total Funds
<b>Income</b>				
Donations	2,216	-	2,216	1,611
Charitable Activities	-	39,500	39,500	30,413
Other Income	12,103	9,012	21,115	5,239
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>14,319</b>	<b>48,512</b>	<b>62,831</b>	<b>37,263</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Staffing Costs	11,407	29,597	41,004	29,573
Volunteers' costs	31	359	390	780
Operational / Activity	419	1,771	2,190	1,754
Publicity / Marketing	701	-	701	393
Other Administration	1,160	2,258	3,418	2,507
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>13,718</b>	<b>33,985</b>	<b>47,703</b>	<b>35,006</b>
<b>NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE)</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>14,527</b>	<b>15,128</b>	<b>2,257</b>
Total funds brought forward at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021	15,723	26,475	42,198	39,941
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>16,324</b>	<b>41,002</b>	<b>57,326</b>	<b>42,198</b>

**BALANCE SHEET**  
For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Unrestricted fund	Restricted funds	Year ended 31.03.22 Total Funds	Year ended 31.03.21 Total Funds
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Cash at Bank	16,437	41,002	57,439	42,354
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>16,437</b>	<b>41,002</b>	<b>57,439</b>	<b>42,354</b>
Creditors: amounts falling due within One year	113	-	113	156
 Net current assets/(liabilities)	<u>16,324</u>	<u>41,002</u>	<u>57,326</u>	<u>42,198</u>
<b>FUNDS</b>				
Unrestricted fund			16,324	15,723
Restricted fund			41,002	26,475
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>			<u>57,326</u>	<u>42,198</u>

For the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Charity Trustees Responsibilities:

- The members have not required the charity to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476; and
- The charity trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

The financial statements on pages were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue and signed on their behalf by:

Name: MANDIP SINGH SEEHRA

Date: 5.12.2022



**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
For the year ended 31 March 2022

**Basis of preparing the financial statements**

The financial statements of the CIO have been prepared using the accruals basis together with the Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities 2011.

**Taxation**

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

**Fund Accounting**

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes. Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

**Volunteer help**

The value of any volunteer help received is not included in the financial statements but is described in the trustees' report.

**TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS**

No Member received any remuneration or other benefits for being a trustee.

**Trustees' expenses** - No expenses were paid to trustees

**RESTRICTED FUNDS**

**Restricted funds held at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022**

	Balance b/f	Received	Spent	Balance c/f
Events and Workshops	2,492	13,512	(12,118)	3,886
Core salaries	22,739	35,000	(21,232)	36,507
Wellbeing grant	1,244	-	(635)	609
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,475</b>	<b>48,512</b>	<b>(33,985)</b>	<b>41,002</b>

Restricted funding received from:

AHI – Creative Café and Open Mic events  
Coventry City of Culture – Creative Café  
Tesco Charitable Foundation – Additional staffing  
Tudor Trust – Salaries and Wellbeing grant

Grants were gratefully received from Albert Hunt, Amnesty Homelessness International, Belgrade Theatre, Cardboard Citizens, Coventry City of Culture, Eveson Charitable Trust, Heart of England Charitable Foundation, Tesco Charitable Foundation and Tudor Trust.



**Section A**

**Independent Examiner's Report**

**Report to the trustees/  
members of**

Charity Name  
Underground Lights

**On accounts for the year  
ended**

31st March 2022

**Charity no  
(if any)**

1179553

**Set out on pages**

One and Fourteen

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2022.

**Responsibilities and  
basis of report**

As the charity trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with 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 (other than that disclosed below \*) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect,:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

**Signed:**

*A Rylett*

**Date:**

28<sup>th</sup> November 2022

**Name:**

Alan Rylett

**Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):**

**Address:**

1 Borrowdale Drive

Leamington Spa

Warwickshire CV32 6NY

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

**Give here details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.**

The accounts were examined and to the extent that papers have been provided are correct.

The computer records have made the accounts clear and precise.

**UNDERGROUND LIGHTS**

England & Wales - Charity number 1179553

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# Accounts

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UNDERGROUND  
LIGHTS COMMUNITY  
THEATRE

Underground Lights

Annual Report and Financial  
Statements for the year ended  
March 2021

Charity Number: 1179553

## Underground Lights

### Trustees Report for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

The trustees of Underground Lights present their report with Financial Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. The trustees confirm that the Annual Report and financial statements comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).

#### **Reference and Administrative Details**

Underground Lights is a not for profit Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

Charity Status: Registered with the Charity Commission

Charity number 1179553 (14<sup>th</sup> August 2018)

Registered Address: c/o Belgrade Theatre, Belgrade Square, Corporation Street,  
Coventry. CV1 1GS

Trustees who served the charity during the period were as follows:

Jonathan Chilvers (Chair)

Tracy Villiers

Emma Marks

Colin Tysall

Mandip Seehra (appointed October 2020)

Staff: Emma Ormerod, Artistic Director/CEO

Beth Fiducia-Brookes, Lead Drama Facilitator

Wes Finch, Projects & Activities Assistant (appointed as  
Sessional Facilitator, January 2021)

Jessie Dutton, Projects & Activities Assistant (appointed  
November 2020)

Frankie Robson, Sessional Facilitator (appointed November  
2020)

Volunteer treasurer: Becky Eccleston

Independent examiner of accounts: Alan Rylett

## **Structure, governance and management**

Underground Lights is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. It became a constituted organisation on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2018 and a registered charity on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

The trustees as a group are responsible for the overall governance of the Charity and the constitution requires there to be a minimum of three trustees. The trustees are not remunerated for their work. They aim to meet at least four times per year and are responsible for all major financial and strategic decisions, and the establishment of major policies.

Apart from the first trustees, every trustee is appointed for a term of three years. In selecting trustees the board has regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the Charity. Our commitment to being a member-led organisation means that it is important to recruit individuals to our board who have experience of mental health issues and/or homelessness. Currently of the five people on our board three people have lived experience of either mental health issues or homelessness.

Upon receiving an expression of interest in becoming a trustee, individuals are invited to discuss the organisation and the role further by telephone or face to face either with the Artistic Director/CEO or a member of the board. They are then sent an application to complete and meet more formally with the Chair of trustees. The role and responsibilities of a trustee are discussed in more detail at this point. If both parties wish to pursue the application a new trustee is appointed by resolution at a convened meeting of the board of trustees. New trustees are required to sign a Code of Conduct and are given a pack containing our constitution, business plan, latest annual report and accounts and links to the Charity Commission's advice relating to the roles and responsibilities of trustees.

Day-to-day management of the Charity has been delegated to the Artistic Director/CEO. The Artistic Director/CEO is supported by a Lead Drama Facilitator, Projects & Activities Assistant, sessional facilitators and volunteers who are in turn responsible for the delivery of our work.

Grant applications prior to consideration by the trustees are handled by the Artistic Director/CEO.

## **Objectives and activities**

Underground Lights is an independent community theatre charity that is run for and by people experiencing homelessness and/or mental health issues.

Our charitable purpose is for the public benefit, the relief of those in need, in particular but not exclusively, people experiencing homelessness and/or mental distress in the Coventry, Warwickshire and surrounding area through the provision of drama/performing arts workshops and other activities or forms of training/support.

The trustees confirm that in setting objectives and planning activities, they have given due consideration to general guidance by the Charity Commission relating to public benefit and in particular to its supplementary public benefit guidance.

The objectives of the Charity are as follows:

- To offer regular, structured drama workshops in a relaxed and friendly environment for a diverse range of people.
- To provide opportunities for performance.
- To run one-off workshops/short programmes
- To enable participants to support and lead groups, support other participants, and actively take part in the running of the organisation.
- To run programmes to develop general leadership skills for use in different contexts outside of the organisation.

### **Achievements and performance**

Covid-19 has presented us with many challenges and over the past year and the staff team has collectively worked very hard to continue to deliver sessions and support members. You can read a summary of our year in lockdown [here](#).

### **Spring and Summer 2020**

#### *Creative Groups*

- Our spring performance was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. As a team we responded rapidly by changing our model of working. We set up three zoom groups and ran 13 weeks of creative activity from the start of April to July. We were able to support approximately 15 of our members in this way (and some members joined the groups via loudspeaker over the phone).
- We also began 1:1 work with members, calling those who did not have internet access each week and providing extra staff support via WhatsApp for members with additional needs. Our bid to Heart of England for £1,200 emergency funding was successful which enabled us to increase staff time to support members.
- We set up a 'Stay Creative and Connected' Facebook group for members to share their work. 31 members and trustees joined this group and this was a supportive place where members have shared their creative work and other activities of interest to them. Several members started watching more online theatre (eg. National Theatre productions).
- At the start of June we also started running weekly 'catch up chatter' sessions for members on a Wednesday afternoon. These groups were well attended with between 7 and 14 people joining us for sessions.
- We held a summer term online sharing to a small invited audience in July and this was well received.

*"On Facebook I have been commenting on Underground Lights members' posts. I want them to know that I care about the work that they are doing and I enjoy seeing it so much! I have got to know my friends at Underground Lights even better I think in these past few weeks through seeing their fantastic work and by messaging them. My communication skills have got better because my confidence has grown. I think by getting so involved online, I've become more outgoing. I also think – dare I say it! – that I have slowly been learning about some technical skills such as going on Zoom and Facebook. I've never done these things before. I'm still learning but I'm sure I'll get there in the end!"*

### Other Activities and Achievements

- Beth (our Lead Drama Facilitator) organised a Q&A with the theatre company Clown Funeral in May which was well attended, with 10 members logging in.
- Naomi Rogers (a former ballet student and now a trainee arts psychotherapist) ran two movement workshops for us via zoom in June.
- Two of our members were accepted onto the City of Culture leadership programme.
- Beth and Wes (Projects and Activities Assistant) recorded a 'City Warm Ups' video for the Belgrade Theatre.
- One of our members also created dance videos for our Facebook group, one of which was also shared as part of the 'City Warm Ups' scheme.

### Projects: Creative Packs and 'Send a Smile' Postcards

*"It struck me that not everybody has materials at home to create art. So I suggested making creative packs to send out to members, with a programme of activities and the materials required to take part in them. The idea was a hit".*

Hayley

Hayley joined Underground Lights as a member of our Creative Café in July 2019. At the start of the lockdown, she suggested the idea of putting together creative packs for people who couldn't afford them. So we worked with City of Culture, Crisis, Grapevine, Arty Folks and the Belgrade Theatre to develop the idea. City of Culture agreed to fund the project and 150 packs were delivered to UL members (and partner organisation members) for Easter 2020. City of Culture subsequently delivered a further 450 across the city.

In May 2020 we were joined by the national organisation With One Voice (now Arts and Homelessness International) who supported us to develop the second stage of the project. Hayley (with our drama facilitator, Beth) developed the postcards and masks project for the second stage of the packs. We sent out packs with 'smile mask'

materials and blank postcards that people could decorate with something that made them smile. Underground Lights (Beth and Hayley) and the Belgrade Theatre then ran two mask making workshops in July.

During the third lockdown in January 2021, Hayley suggested that we explore Shadow Puppets in our online creative groups. The third set of creative packs were developed together with our members. Taking inspiration from Aesop's Fables, members chose stories and animal characters. Hayley and Jessie (our Projects and Activities Assistant) then developed materials for further creative packs and over 60 packs were delivered to UL, Crisis members and residents of the Days Hotel.

Meanwhile, Arts and Homelessness International were sending out postcards to their partner organisation members across the world and the project has now travelled to homeless communities in the USA, Brazil, South Africa, India, Japan, and Australia. It has been wonderful to see Beth and Hayley's idea grow, develop and travel across the world! It has also been an important opportunity for partnership working (particularly with City of Culture and Arts and Homelessness International) and people have been very appreciative of their postcards. We are planning for the postcards to be displayed during the Arts and Homelessness Festival in October 2021.

*"We've got to see different talents by members, whether it be colouring, paintings, drawings, and needle crafts. Thank you for supplying the materials needed to while away the time instead of watching TV to only hear about what this terrible virus is causing to our planet [...] Friday is the highlight of my week where I can go onto zoom and see my drama friends and even do activities with them which has been good for my wellbeing. If I didn't have this help I don't know what I'd do".*

## Autumn 2020

### Creative Groups

- For the first half of term (September and October) we ran three socially distanced support groups at the Belgrade with restricted numbers.
- However, November saw us with the challenge of working through the second lockdown. On this occasion we were able to continue working in person with eight members who didn't have internet access or who couldn't connect to Zoom for different reasons. Members who were able to connect online worked via Zoom with the staff team.
- We ended our term with our Lockdown Lessons online sharing event, which also enabled members who weren't online to participate via Zoom in the Patrick Suite at the Belgrade Theatre. 26 audience members attended this event.

- 2020 was an extremely challenging year, but by focusing on supporting our regular group of 28 members we found ways to enable everyone to stay creative and connected.

*"I love my drama! Wednesday mornings are just for me".*

**Emma** joined our Creative Café sessions in August 2019. She found out about Underground Lights because she was a member of Crisis. Emma has been a member of our Wednesday morning support group and really enjoyed developing her character, Chantelle, for our [Commedia dell'arte film](#). At the start of the second lockdown Emma was worried that she wouldn't be able to join online Zoom sessions because she didn't have enough data on her phone. So she was really happy that the members who weren't online could continue meeting. You can see Emma talking about what the drama group means to her [here](#).

### Other activities and achievements

- During the autumn term we were involved in a range of online activities:
  - Monthly online Open Mic event run jointly with Crisis.
  - Ascension Dance – In Touch project (run by Ascension Dance for Crisis and UL members, with staff support from Crisis and UL).
  - Poetry group (delivered by Frankie and Ben) – for UL and Crisis members, leading to the performance '[Community to me is...](#)' in October.
- Staff team attended meetings of Coventry's new Arts and Homelessness Forum.
- We supported two Occupational Therapy students from Coventry University who attended our groups as part of their 3<sup>rd</sup> year placement at the Belgrade Theatre.
- Jessie Dutton was appointed as our new Projects & Activities Assistant.
- Yvonne Cullen, a PhD student at the University of Kent began a longitudinal study with our members on their experiences of agency within Underground Lights.

*"Underground Lights is really, really good for being able to express ourselves, it's really good for everyone to be able to just do our best ... and the most important thing is that everyone supports each other and is enthusiastic and I don't think I've ever experienced it before in my life."*

### Spring Term 2021

#### **Shadow Puppets**

We had hoped to meet in person for the spring term but moved back online and to remote activities in line with government restrictions and to help keep our members

safe. As always we wanted to help keep our members connected and creative during this time, so decided to send out our third activity pack.

Hayley (who initiated the original creative packs in lockdown one), suggested we explore Shadow Puppets this term. We thought this was a great idea and really different to our previous projects (devising theatre, Commedia dell'arte, pantomime and improvisation), and it's been something members have enjoyed exploring.

Linking the creative packs to the theme for the term has continued to enable our members to lead the process on what they want to create as they have the resources they need. Members, who were unable to access Zoom, in addition to these creative packs, have also been posted a disposable camera and challenged to take creative photos which we hope to use as part of an exhibition in the future.

During our drama workshops members shared ideas and discussed themes they thought would work well, and at the suggestion of our Project and Activities Assistant Jessie, we have taken inspiration from Aesop's Fables. Members chose stories and fine-tuned the message they want to convey for modern audience. They decided to keep the animal characters and created the puppets. Together over zoom we made trees and other shadow puppets which we then used to tell these stories. The shadow puppet stories were then recorded over zoom and on member's phones and edited together, along with the audio and music to make a short video by each group.

It has been really exciting to see the collaborative way in which members have led this process; from coming up with the initial idea, to what was needed in the activity packs, to which shadow puppets each group decided they would make. Our members amaze me with their creativity, enthusiasm and supportiveness.

*By Beth*

- Due to the third national lockdown we returned to running online groups and making 1:1 calls. Groups developed shadow puppet creative packs and over 60 packs were sent to Underground Lights and Crisis members, and residents at the Days Hotel.
- We received funding from National Survivor User Network (NSUN) for a BSL interpreter for our online shadow puppet performance and 35 audience members joined us for this event.
- In addition to our online drama groups, we also ran online Creative Café sessions during the spring term.

### **Audience Feedback:**

*"The storytelling is mesmerizing"*

*"There is such a lovely dream like quality to some of these tales – magical".*

*"This has been so incredible. I've so, so enjoyed this".*

### *Other activities and achievements*

- We co-hosted the Arts and Homelessness Forum for three months, with one of our members co-chairing the meetings.
- Several members joined the steering group for 'Home', the Arts and Homelessness Festival in October 2021.
- Our sessional facilitators also began to work on our outreach project and despite the many challenges of lockdown, ran two online workshops to create an audio track for the final piece (to be launched in July 2021).
- We developed a Staff Handbook and ran two training sessions for the staff team.
- 'A Stitch in Time', a collaborative project with Needle Craft for Wellbeing, saw four of our members' poetry and crafted items come together with the yarners work to make a beautiful window display at the Belgrade Theatre for people to visit as part of their Lockdown Exercise. Frankie who led the project for Underground Lights spoke about the project on BBC Coventry and Warwickshire in February.
- Rob, one of our members also took part in Cardboard Citizens online West Midlands specific performance 'The Vagrancy Act' and panel discussion. Several members also joined to support and engaged in the discussion too.
- Tudor Trust offered a wellbeing grant of £2,000 to their grantees for trustees, staff and volunteers. Through this fund Underground Lights team members participated in a variety of activities (baking, photography, drumming, art etc.) to support their individual wellbeing. It has also funded reflective practice sessions for our core staff team.
- We were successful in our application for legal pro bono work (via The Fore Foundation) and the global law firm Shearman and Stirling began a policy and legal audit of the charity.

*"It all went seamlessly! I particularly liked the fact that we got a BSL signer on board, I thought that was very inclusive. I thought it was magic".*

*"I'm proud of our piece... because it was so hard getting us all together every week... it looked so professional. I'm particularly proud of myself for being there every week and committing to it... It's really helped with my depression, this drama group – and I think it's saved me."*

## Financial Review

The Covid-19 pandemic meant that during this period there were unexpected demands with regard to our capacity and resources as an organisation. Our emergency fundraising efforts were successful and we received additional grants from Heart of England and Groundwork - Tesco Bags of Help scheme. City of Culture and Arts and Homelessness International also supported the Creative Packs and Postcards Project work.

At a board meeting in January 2021, trustees approved a payment of £150 for freelance photography work by Mandip Seehra that he had completed prior to applying for and becoming a trustee in the financial year 2020/1. He did not invoice because of the second part of the work he was due to do which did not happen because of the pandemic. He then became a trustee. The board agreed that this was permissible in our constitution and took steps to ensure that the decision was fair (Mandip did not attend this part of the board meeting and was not involved in the decision).

In preparing the financial statements the trustees believe that Underground Lights is able to continue as a going concern until April 2022. However, continuing in operational existence over the coming year will deplete our reserves and we will not be able to continue to operate beyond this date without successfully raising more funds. Fundraising both for the medium and longer term will continue to be a priority for the coming year.

This report was approved by the trustees on **15<sup>th</sup> July 2021** and signed on their behalf by:



**Jonathan Chilvers, Chair of Trustees**



**Section A**

**Independent Examiner's Report**

**Report to the trustees/  
members of**

Charity Name  
Underground Lights

**On accounts for the year  
ended**

31st March 2021

**Charity no  
(if any)**

1179553

**Set out on pages**

One to Six

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2021.

**Responsibilities and  
basis of report**

As the charity trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with 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 (other than that disclosed below \*) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect,:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

**Signed:**

**Date:**

28<sup>th</sup> April 2021

**Name:**

Alan Rylett

**Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):**

**Address:**

1 Borrowdale Drive

Leamington Spa

Warwickshire CV32 6NY

**Section B****Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

**Give here details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.**

The accounts were examined and to the extent that papers have been provided are correct. I haven't examined detailed invoices paid but have accepted that the computer system holds all details.

The computer records have made the accounts clear and precise.

**Report of the Directors and unaudited financial Statements for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 for Underground Lights, Charities Number 1179553.**

This report has been prepared by A.M. Rylett following a full examination of the accounts for the period.

Balance Sheet provided from the "Zero" computer system and attached to this report were found to be a correct representation of the balances for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

**1. Statutory Information**

Underground Lights is a Charity number 1179553 under the Charities Commission for England and Wales.

**2. Accounting Policies**

**Basis of preparing the accounts**

The Financial Statement for Underground Lights has been prepared following the Charities Commission regulations SORP 2011 using a standard accruals accounting basis.

**Turnover**

Turnover represents grants and donations made to the charity during the accounting period.

**Tangible fixed assets**

Depreciation is provided on all assets in excess of £1,000 on a "straight line" basis over a three year period.

**3. Employees**

The Charity employed an Artistic Director, Lead Drama Facilitator and a Projects and Activities Assistant during the accounting period none of whom were paid in excess of £50,000.

**4. Tangible Fixed Assets**

The Charity has no Tangible fixed assets as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

**5. Debtors: Amounts falling due within one year**

The Charity has no trade debtors as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

**6. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year**

There was a single creditor amount due to pensions provider. This is shown correctly on the Balance Sheet.

**7. Income and Expenditure for the year April 2020 to March 2021**

The Income and Expenditure report provided from the computer system was found to be correct and is attached to this report.

## 8. Funds

As at the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 the Charity held the money in the following funds

### Restricted Funds

Fund	Amount
Belgrade	£500
City of Culture	£999
Tudor Trust	£22,739
WMCA	£1,244
Total Restricted	£26,475
Unrestricted Funds	£15,723
Total Funds Available	£42,198

AM Rylett  
May 12<sup>th</sup> 2021

# Balance Sheet

Underground Lights  
As at 31 March 2021

31 MAR 2021

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## Current Assets

Cash at bank and in hand	
Treasurers Account	42,354
Total Cash at bank and in hand	42,354
Total Current Assets	42,354

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## Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

Pensions Payable	156
Total Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	156

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Net Current Assets (Liabilities) 42,198

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Total Assets less Current Liabilities 42,198

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Net Assets 42,198

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## Capital and Reserves

Current Year Earnings	2,257
Retained Earnings	39,941
Total Capital and Reserves	42,198

# Income and Expenditure

## Underground Lights

For the year ended 31 March 2021

2021

Income	
<b>Grant Income</b>	
City of Culture	713
Donations	1,611
Heart of England	2,700
Other Income	5,239
Tudor Trust	27,000
<b>Total Grant Income</b>	<b>37,263</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>37,263</b>
Expenses	
Staffing Costs	29,573
<b>Volunteers</b>	
Volunteer Travel Expenses	24
Volunteer Wellbeing Fund	756
<b>Total Volunteers</b>	<b>780</b>
<b>Operational / Activity</b>	
Creative Packs	586
Operational/Activity (Outreach Project)	944
Refreshments	74
Venue Hire	150
<b>Total Operational / Activity</b>	<b>1,754</b>
<b>Publicity and Marketing</b>	
Publicity & Marketing - Mailchimp	82
Publicity & Marketing - Photography	150
Publicity & Marketing - Printing / Flyers	103
Publicity & Marketing - Website	57
<b>Total Publicity and Marketing</b>	<b>393</b>
<b>Other Administrative Costs</b>	
Admin, IT & Training Costs - DBS	118
Admin, IT & Training Costs - Insurance	161
Admin, IT & Training Costs - Training and Development	638
Office costs - general	244
Office costs - mobile phones	569
Office costs - session resources	142
On Costs	635
<b>Total Other Administrative Costs</b>	<b>2,507</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>35,006</b>
<b>Net Income (Expenditure)</b>	<b>2,257</b>