

THE TAUNTON THESPIANS

Registered Charity No. 1189940

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

FOR THE PERIOD

1st SEPTEMBER 2024 to 31st AUGUST 2025

Page 1	Cover
Page 2-4	Chairman's Report
Page 5	Independent Examiner's Report
Page 6-7	Balance Sheet
Page 8	Statement of Financial Activities
Page 9	Notes to the Accounts

Chairman's Report to the AGM of Taunton Thespians 22/10/2024

Good evening and welcome to The Place for this year's AGM. Very many thanks to everyone who came along in October. This is my report as Taunton Thespians' Chair for the 2024/25 season.

Firstly a reminder of the TT's CIO objectives:

- 1) To promote the advancement and improvement of general education in relation to all aspects of the art of drama and the development of public appreciation of such art.
- 2) Such charitable objects or purposes that the Trustees shall in their discretion think fit.

A year ago, at the 2024 AGM, I expressed my hopes for the year ahead in three words: Communication, Companionship and Crowd-pleasing shows.

Before we review the past twelve months I would like to say a very big thank you to the members of the 2024/25 Committee. Could the Committee members please stand and be recognised?

Committee activities

Firstly I must recognise **Dona Bullion** who started the year as Social Officer but had to stand down due to personal commitments. Many thanks to Dona for her work on the Committee and her continuing contribution as Wardrobe Mistress and warden of The Place.

Suzanne Guppy has been busy as the Secretary, dealing with correspondence, administration and taking the minute at Committee meetings. And Suzanne has also taken part in outreach by delivering Shakespeare workshops at a local school and – most recently – taking part in the Thespians entry in Taunton Carnival. In fact she danced the whole way round.

Bridget Flett has been the Membership Officer, keeping the records on MemberMojo, providing information to potential new members, sending out the regular update emails and producing the excellent TT Times, four times a year. Bridget has also assisted with outreach through the Dressing Up Tent at Taunton Together and has been involved with productions.

Karen Bolton has been maintaining the website and keeping our presence up on all the socials as well as dealing with enquiries and performing in shows. Well done for your Pheobe Rees nomination for "The Mirror Crack'd".

Lynn Kitson leads the Marketing and Publicity sub committee with responsibility for fliers, posters, billboards and other marketing tools. Plus making sure that we hit the printing deadlines for venues often months before we hold auditions. Lynn started with acting roles but she has taken on the technical challenge of running sound for a couple of shows.

Jo Case started the year as our Productions Officer but has had to stand down due to work commitments. We valued her vision, wisdom and imagination plus her insistence on being ambitious and striving for the highest standards.

Mark Dawson started the year on Committee as a Committee member without portfolio but soon offered to assist Jo with forward planning for productions and took on the role when Jo had to step back. And Mark has also been busy with producing shows, identifying tour venues, running play readings, helping with the dressing up tent and driving the van for the tour. To say nothing of his epic round Somerset missions to position the billboards. Fifteen for the summer tour alone!

Alastair MacLeod joined the Committee at the last AGM and has contributed to all the discussions. Continuing the theme of trying new things, Alastair shared the role of Tour Manager for the first time in July for "A Midsummer Night's Dream". And will be flexing his directorial muscles for the first time by taking on our entry in the Somerset Fellowship of Drama One Act play festival next March.

clear out of two skips worth of excess stuff, installation of improved heating in the Green Room and the purchase of exciting new sound and lighting equipment. But the biggest change is the installation of our lovely new kitchen! Next

Lizzie Knighton was coopted onto the Committee into the Social role and has delivered a run of great activities including the excellent Ding Dong Christmas Party last December, the hilarious May Madness Quiz and very popular workshops covering topics such as Stage Management (February) and Lighting and Sound (April). The latter attracted 30 people from across 6 groups and societies. And Lizzie coordinated the Thespians entry in October in the Taunton Carnival and build our own little cart.

Rob Smith has been our Treasurer for five years now. This is the classic example of the background committee role without which the society could not function. As well as keeping a very firm eye on budgets and expenditure, Rob has developed a skill for identifying grant opportunities, as you will see from the Finance report to follow. Rob is standing down from the Committee from now. His calm guidance – and sense of humour – will be missed from the Committee table, but he is still going to be around and has volunteered to be assistant director on our March Tacchi production.

Let's review the last 12 months against my three three words and matters discussed at the last AGM.

Firstly "Crowd-pleasing shows"

November 2024 – Dracula at the Brewhouse

This stunning production, directed by Jo Case, continued our run of producing original scripts. The brand-new adaptation, by a former Thespian Jasmine Otley, was bold and ambitious and challenging. But it is good to push ourselves from time to time. Jo's production was full of technical challenges from the impressive set to the use of the vomitorium, the music and even the final snow drop. But the actors and crew rose to the occasion and audiences were very, very impressed. We even had people in the audience dressed as vampires!

Talking of pushing the envelope, I took on a personal challenge and stepped out of my comfort zone to be DSM and ended up operating sound as well. Frankly, I was terrified all the way through the technical rehearsal but with much calm advice, help and support from Chris Alexander at the Brewhouse and Lizzie Knighton (Stage Manager) and the unflappable Claire Knighton (Lights), I soon was able to relax and had a pleasure of watching the show every night. My take-away? Don't be afraid to try a new role in a production. There is plenty of help available and you might find something new to enjoy.

Jo's production won recognition in the NODA South West Awards and is still attracting attention. We have been contacted by the Brewhouse: they were so impressed by the show that it has inspired them to create a murder mystery set at a production of Dracula. And they have asked to borrow our costumes and props and even some of the actors for next January.

March 2025 – The Mirror Crack'd" at the Tacchi Morris

Well done to Sue Meredith, Martin Jevon and team for a very entertaining production of Agatha Christie's "A Mirror Crack'd". This attracted large and appreciative audiences at the Tacchi Morris in mid-March. This was a new script and we think we are among the first amateur groups to perform this adaptation. It is great to see the Thespians tackling new scripts and fresh approaches. The play included old favourites characters such as Miss Marple and Inspector Craddock but the script is a very modern re-telling of the story. I was very impressed with Sue and Martin's innovative use of video clips in the style of old Pathe news reels to introduce the acts and the great way that they and the cast handled the multiple flashbacks in the simple but flexible set.

It was great to see Sue and Martin for involving new, young actors and congratulations to Imalya Warnasuriya and Lily MacNiece for their nominations in the Phoebe Rees under 21 category. And congratulations to Alison Jenkinson and Karen Bolton for their acting nominations too

And well done to Lorna Evans as stage manager. The lamp drop effect made the audience members jump every night!

March 2025 – Rats at the County Drama Festival

Only a week later, Charlie Warren and his team represented the Thespians at the County Drama Festival at the Warehouse Theatre in Ilminster with "Rats" by Pheobe Rees. We were disappointed not to win through to the next round but the adjudicator gave very positive feedback about the play and we were delighted that Suzanne Guppy won the "Champagne Moment" award. This was for a lovely comic piece involving a table and a broom. Many thanks to all Thespians who supported the play both at Ilminster and for the dress rehearsal at The Place. This was Charlie's debut as a director for the Thespian and I very much look forward to seeing Charlie's next production.

July 2025 – A Midsummer Night's Dream – on tour

Huge congratulations to Bob Corwin and his team for a very successful tour of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in July. The weather was very kind to us and over 900 people came to see the show, with several venues selling out!

Every production runs on teamwork and comradery, but this goes double for the tour. Director Bob set the tone early with his very clear vision and enthusiastic leadership. Like Jo, Sue and Martin, in the other shows this season, Bob was successful in attracting talented new young actors. But at the same time he had a wealth of very experienced and creative older members who helped make the production such a magical experience. How many other pastimes can include such an age range of participants?

Congrats to Bob and team for a Rose Bowl nomination and three Phoebe Rees nominations and to Rob Adam, Alan Coles, Phil Turnley, Zoe Hudson, Gregg Cook and Harriet Thomas for their acting nominations.

Communication and Companionship

At last year's AGM, we had some really good discussions about aspects of the society. I took away five topics for the incoming committee to consider:

- a) Longer lead-in times and more information for Members about events, Committee discussions etc. Committee committed to issue the TT Times four times a year. In April we introduced a monthly email directly after the committee meeting to flag upcoming events. And we circulated a membership survey in the summer. Results will be shared later in this meeting. I'd be interested to hear in the discussions afterward if these have made a difference and what else could be tried.
- b) Build up our pool of people with technical skills. On-going project- thanks to Lizzie for running stage management and lighting workshops. We have had people running sound for the first time and have three members working together to design the lighting for "The Woman In White." More workshops planned.
- c) Succession planning for Vice Presidents, role description and appointment process. Thanks to Ron Roberts, have agreed a role description and process in line with our society rules.
- d) Consider outreach opportunities. Have suggested several activities but have had limited support from membership. Well done Suzanne for work with school. The Dressing Up tents at the Taunton Together event and the Carnival were successful but could have done with a few more members to help.
- e) Increase in annual subscription. The summer survey showed support for a modest increase. You will have the opportunity to voting on the amount shortly.

General reflections.

In summary, we have had another busy and productive year. Four productions, improvements to The Place, social and outreach activities. We are clearly meeting out charitable objectives.

Looking ahead,

Fingers crossed for all our members who have been nominated in the Rose Bowl completions for the awards night this weekend. Congratulations to our friends at Street Theatre and @2K who have recently completed very successful productions. The close links and camaraderie flow within and between local groups and the Somerset drama scene is all the stronger for it.

The 2025/6 season is underway with "The Woman In White" recently performed at the Brewhouse Theatre. Congratulations to Director Emma Vicarage, Producer Mark Dawson and their team for a beautiful and moving production.

You will find information about the 2025/6 season productions on your chairs and I invite and encourage everyone to think about how they could get involved. As our VP Ron Roberts would say: it might be by taking on an acting or production role, it might be by offering to help with programme selling or set painting or delivering billboards. Or it might be by getting up a party of friends and neighbours to come and see the shows.

Looking further ahead, as mentioned in the September TT Times, 2027/28 will be the Thespians 100th season so please start thinking about how we could mark that special milestone. For previous special anniversaries, we have held dinner dances and parties, hired the Brewhouse for a variety evening involving other local societies, created an anniversary logo etc. Let's really push the boat out and celebrate the 100th season! the 2026/7 season will be the Thespians centenary year.

My suggestion for three words for the new season? How about Innovation, Imagination and Involvement?
Thank you.



Nicola Dawson
26th November 2025

THE TAUNTON THESPIANS
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE TAUNTON THESPIANS

I report on the Financial Statements of the charity The Taunton Thespians (Charity No. 800217) for the period 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025, which are set out on pages 5 to 8.

Respective Responsibilities of General Committee and Examiner

The charity's committee are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's committee consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Charities Act"), and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- s examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act;
- s to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under Section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act; and
- s to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as members of the General Committee concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:-

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
 - s to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - s to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Acthave not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Date: 15th September 2025

Edward Coton LTCL AFA/MIPA
TaxAssist Accountants
24 Bridge Street
Taunton
Somerset
TA1 1UB

THE TAUNTON THESPIANS
BALANCE SHEET
YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

	<u>Note</u>	<u>2025</u> 12 Months £ £	<u>2024</u> 12 Months £ £
Fixed Assets	2	223,576	218,847
Current Assets			
Cash at Bank - Treasurers Current Account		9,622	11,226
- Business Bank Interest Account		31,670	19,969
- John Meikle Legacy Account		1,835	6,967
- Social/Warden Account		45	114
- PayPal Wallet		175	112
- Redwood Account		30,099	29,046
Petty Cash held		74	83
Bar stocks at cost		49	155
Prepayments			
Future Shows		1,209	3,526
Accrued Income			
Prepaid Subscriptions		(351)	(420)
Prepaid donations			
Future Shows			(6)
		<u>74,428</u>	<u>70,772</u>
Creditors: Amounts Falling Due Within One Year			
Matthews Electrical		(503)	
Kitchen Installation		(2,500)	
Barrington Court Dragons Venue			(275)
Independent Examiner		(280)	(268)
SW Heritage			(106)
Debtors			
Ticket Source Dragons			186
XCS (printer)		<u>20</u>	<u></u>
Net Current Assets		71,165	70,309
Net Assets		<u>294,741</u>	<u>289,156</u>
Funds (all unrestricted)	3		
General Reserve		71,165	70,309
Capital Reserve		223,576	218,847
Development Fund		0	0
		<u>294,741</u>	<u>289,156</u>

Approved by the General Committee on ??? October 2025 and signed on its behalf by:-

Nicola Dawson - Chairman

Robert Smith - Treasurer

NDawson
RD Smith

The notes on pages 8 and 9 form part of these Accounts.

THE TAUNTON THESPIANS
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

	2025		2024	
	12 Months		12 Months	
	£	£	£	£
Incoming Resources				
Income from stage productions		38,429		27,272
Subscriptions		1,104		1,065
Interest received		1,320		1,432
Club activities		701		1,254
Wardrobe & Equipment Hire		328		787
Donations		1,094		125
Letting Income		6,406		6,171
Gift Aid Received		188		170
Theatre Tax Relief		5,012		2,816
Total Incoming Resources		54,582		41,091
Resources Expended				
Expenditure on stage productions	31,121		26,137	
Club activities	581		1,305	
Cost of premises				
- Rates and water	231		256	
- Repairs and improvements	9,429		6,882	
- Safety and security	918		1,548	
- Heat and light	1,395		1,352	
- Insurance	1,262		1,202	
Warden's Honorarium	300		325	
Postage, stationery	0		0	
Subscriptions and Licences	863		948	
Printing	372		233	
Sundry expenses	459		655	
Marketing	25		0	
Clothing sales	25		32	
Independent Examiners Fee	280		268	
Other Professional Fees (re Theatre Tax Relief)	720		420	
Depreciation	953		427	
PayPal Charges	35		52	
Sumup Charges	31		27	
Write-offs	0		0	
Total Resources Expended		48,997		42,071
Net Ingoing/(Outgoing) Resources		5,585		(980)
Accumulated Funds Brought Forward		289,155		290,135
Revaluation of Freehold Land & Buildings		0		0
Accumulated Funds Carried Forward		294,741		289,155
(Note rounding error on total)				

THE TAUNTON THESPIANS
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

1. Accounting Policies

General

These Accounts have been prepared under the historic cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of investments, and in accordance with applicable accounting standards, the Charities Act and the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities".

Fixed Assets

Individual fixed assets costing £80 or more are capitalised at cost.

Depreciation is provided at the following rates, based on the estimated useful life of the fixed assets and their anticipated residual value:-

Freehold land and buildings	2% straight line to 31/08/22
From 2022-23 financial year changed to revaluation on recommendation of independent examiner. Subsequently adjusted every 5 years.	
Technical equipment	10% reducing balance
Office equipment	10% reducing balance

2. Fixed Assets

	<u>Freehold</u>			
	<u>Land &</u>	<u>Technical</u>	<u>Office</u>	
	<u>Buildings</u>	<u>Equipment</u>	<u>Equipment</u>	<u>Total</u>
	£	£	£	£
<u>Cost</u>				
At 31 August 2024	215,000	10,316	59	225,375
Additions	0	5,142	540	5,681
Revaluation	0	0	0	0
Write-offs	0	0	0	0
At 31 August 2025	215,000	15,458	599	231,056
<u>Depreciation</u>				
At 31 August 2024	0	6,469	59	6,528
Charge for the year	0	899	54	953
At 31 August 2025	0	7,368	113	7,481
<u>Net Book Value</u>				
At 31 August 2025	215,000	8,090	486	223,576
At 31 August 2024	215,000	3,847	0	218,847

THE TAUNTON THESPIANS
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

3. **Funds (all unrestricted)**

	<u>General</u>	<u>Capital</u>	
	<u>Reserve</u>	<u>Reserve</u>	<u>Total</u>
	£	£	£
At 1 September 2024	70,309	218,847	289,156
Transfers	(5,681)	5,681	0
Net ingoing/(outgoings) for the year	5,585	0	5,585
Adjustments - Depreciation	953	(953)	0
Adjustments - Revaluation	0	0	0
At 31 August 2025	71,165	223,576	294,741

* Note rounding error on General Reserve total

The Capital Reserve represents profits which have accrued to the charity from the past sales of freehold land and buildings of £116,943 and from a bequest from a former member of £2,000. This was reduced by £19,174 in 2013 and was subsequently reduced each year to reflect the amount of tangible fixed assets after depreciaton.

From the 2022-23 financial year, the land and buildings have been valued on a revaluation basis.

The General Reserve now shows, fairly, the true amount of Current Assets, (including the John Meikle bequest of £10,000, less expenditure on the Green Room and Kitchen).