

The Windmill Players Thornton Cleveleys



Annual Report 2025



**NODA Award Winner
Best Drama 2023/2024
Love on the Dole**

By Walter Greenwood and Ronald Gow

Contents

A Message from our President.....	3
Chair's Report	4
Secretary's Report	7
Treasurer's Report	8
Independent Examiners Report	8
Income and Expenditure	9
Income and Expenditure / Profit and Loss	10
Directors Group Report.....	13
Windmill Players Murder Mysteries Report.....	14
Friends of The Windmill Players Report.....	15
Theatre Workshop Report.....	16
Photo Gallery	18
Drama Workshop Production 2025	21
Murder Mystery 2025	22
Trustees and Operational Committee	23
Charity Registration & Contacts	24

The Windmill Players is an amateur dramatic organisation, with charitable status, performing plays across all genres at the local theatre. We aim to produce quality live and recorded entertainment, that enriches our community by broadening their experiences and perspectives through theatre and to provide our community the opportunity both to attend and to participate in quality stage productions.

A Message from our President

Starting the season with the popular Murder Mystery tour followed by the great production of *The Corn is Green* at the newly refurbished CRE8IV Little Theatre and then two further productions, I am confident that with full commitment from everyone, The Windmill Players will have a successful year.

I reiterate, it is a privilege and honour to be President of the great Windmill Players.

Thank you.

Maureen McCrea

Chair's Report

The Board of Trustees

The Trustees met twice in October 2024, mainly because of the complexity of the new contract with CRE8IV Little Theatre. The Trustees had identified quite a few issues in the contract which needed clarification and this was eventually achieved at a meeting with Chris and Claire Higgins on 8th October 2024, when the contract for *The Corn is Green* production was signed.

Further Board meetings were held in November 2024 and February 2025, where other issues were raised regarding such things as the lighting and heating at the rehearsal studio. I am pleased to say that the lighting issue has now been resolved, as all the light fittings have now been replaced, and the building will be having insulation installed by the landlord and improvements made to the heating in due course.

At the February meeting it was highlighted that some areas of our website needed updating and this has now been done. However, we are still in the process of updating some of our policy documents and these will be made available as soon as possible.

The Operational Committee

The Operational Committee meets on a regular basis once a month and they have been kept busy with the general day- to- day running of The Windmill Players. They were actively involved along with the Trustees in getting the issues of the contract sorted with CRE8IV Little Theatre in time for our October production of *The Corn is Green*. The Operational Committee work very hard to ensure that everything runs as smoothly as possible, and I for one am so grateful for all the effort every one of them puts in. Unfortunately, two of our committee members, Cath Griffiths and Ruth White, have had to step down from committee work due to other commitments, but I would like to take this opportunity to thank them both for everything they have done during their time on the Operational Committee. We do, however, have a further three people who, following election at the AGM, have now joined us on the Operational Committee. They are, Mark Edmonds, elected as Vice Chair of the Operational Committee and Tina Warren along with Ian Lamond both elected as Operational Committee Members. Welcome to you all.

Finance and Funding Group

Steve Cook and Cath Griffiths have been and still are working tirelessly away in the background on various aspects of fundraising. We have also now become members of The Chartered Institute of Fundraising. The membership of which is now up and running and providing a number of contacts and links to sources of funding opportunities. We really are fortunate to have people like Steve and Cath working on Finance and Funding for The Windmill Players. They are both doing a great job and on behalf of The Windmill Players, I would like to thank them for it.

The Theatre Workshop

The Theatre Workshop has been working very hard under the guidance of Angela Hudson on their presentation of *The Founder of Fleetwood*, which has already been presented at several libraries in the area to great success.

The Theatre Workshop has now become a very popular and valuable asset to The Windmill Players C.I.O, and is now giving us the opportunity to devise projects together through improvisation such as this.

It tells the story of the life of Sir Peter Hesketh Fleetwood of Rossall Hall Fleetwood, who was responsible for bringing the railway to the coast and the building of a new town.... Fleetwood.

Sir Peter Hesketh Fleetwood was a kind man who wanted the best for his workers and he was also a writer and poet. The scenes portrayed in the production were first improvised over about three months.

As each situation was improvised the script began to emerge and was then put together by Theatre Workshop member Christina Higgin. This is a whole new way of working as with traditional theatre it is the other way round. The production itself though is very much a team effort by all the actors and actresses that take part in it.

Telling the story of how the town of Fleetwood was born, it has some wonderful characters and has been expertly directed by Angela who also created The Windmill Players Theatre Workshop. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Angela for all the hard work she has been putting into this project which has been receiving wonderful comments from all who have seen it to date.

Our Productions for the last season (October 2024 to June 2025)

In October 2024 we presented *The Corn Is Green* a classic play by Emlyn Williams and directed by Angela Hudson and Roger Lloyd Jones. This was indeed a very successful production and received NODA nominations for Best Drama, Best Performance in a Drama, Best Supporting Male in a Drama, Best Leading Male Character in a Drama, Best Leading Female in a Drama.

At this event held in February 2025, we also received a nomination for Best Director in respect of our February 2024 production of *The Farndale Avenue Housing Estate Townswomen's Guild Dramatic Society's production of A Christmas Carol*.

Although we did not win anything on the NODA Awards Presentation Evening, it is an accolade in its own right to receive a NODA nomination, so we are all immensely proud of this achievement.

February saw The Windmill Players present John Buchan's *The 39 Steps* adapted by Patrick Barlow and directed by Colin Johnson. This fast-paced semi- improvised comedy was an absolute hoot and went down very well with our audiences. We were all immensely proud of the four actors/actresses who took this on. Four people playing 139 characters between them! Well done to all involved with this production.

In June of this year, one of our members, Ruth White, took on the role of director for the first time and delivered a wonderful play by Blake Morrison about the Bronte' Sisters called *We Are Three Sisters*. Again, this was received very well by our audiences. Like *The Corn Is Green* this was a period play with a large cast so for a first attempt at directing Ruth and all the cast did exceptionally well. Well done!

The Murder Mysteries

This year we trialled a Murder Mystery just before Easter, in addition to the one we normally do in September. The Windmill Players have been presenting the annual Murder Mysteries since 2013 and this will continue for the foreseeable future. However, Di Timmins, who writes and produces the Murder Mysteries, will be directing for us at CRE8TIV Little Theatre in the Spring of 2026, so this additional one may well have been a one-off, but with an enthusiastic cast of 10 it was indeed very successful.

Finally, I would just like to offer a huge thank you to everyone who has helped us with all our productions and community activities over that last year, especially to all those who help back stage with props, prompts, costumes, sound, lighting and set building. You have all done us proud. Well done each and every one of you.

Alan Dickinson
Chairman of The Windmill Players

August 2025

Secretary's Report

A welcome to all our members to the third AGM, to be held in our studio location, Starlight Studios.

We would like to extend our thanks to all members for supporting our social events over the past year.

The past 12 months since the last AGM have been very successful, exciting and also eventful for The Windmill Players.

Our plays presented at CRE8IV Little Theatre have been well-received; our first play of the season, *The Corn is Green* went on to receive NODA nominations for acting, directing and drama awards. Including all plays from 2024, The Windmill Players received several nominations at the local District 2 NODA Awards evening held in February of this year. To receive so many nominations this year really is an amazing achievement, and is testament to all the talented people in our society. We would like to extend congratulations to all the directors, actors and crews who were involved in these productions. We also had the amazing *39 Steps* directed by Colin Johnson which got so much positive feedback and a historic play *We Are Three Sisters* directed by Ruth White which is based on the lives of the Bronte' sisters in Yorkshire. This also received some very nice comments.

Soon after last year's AGM, consultations on the future were launched with CRE8IV Little Theatre, who took over the running of Thornton Little Theatre from Wyre Borough Council. We are looking forward to being able to develop valuable links and to build relationships with CRE8IV in the years to come. All in all, CRE8IV have done the best to help us out on shows nights and we look forward to the next play to be held in October at CRE8IV Little Theatre.

We've had much involvement in community events, including our ever-popular Murder Mysteries in local libraries which has been a great success.

Members continue with their valuable support of N-Vision's talking newspaper and we have had some fantastic donations.

The Theatre Workshop's *The Founder of Fleetwood* presentation, about Sir Peter Hesketh Fleetwood, which was publicly advertised on local radio, has been very well received the libraries in and around Fleetwood, Thornton Cleveleys and Blackpool.

The play reading group continues. Members of the Trustees and Committee attended the Year 11 Awards at Millfield School, as The Windmill Players sponsors one of their awards annually; we were delighted to this year receive personal thanks from the recipient. We continue to adhere to all the new procedures and policies, terms and conditions from the license holders to enable us to perform their plays.

We have had nine new members join us this year

Fern Paisley
Secretary of The Windmill Players - August 2025

Treasurer's Report

Independent Examiners Report

THE WINDMILL PLAYERS BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2025

ASSETS


HSBC Current Account	6,343
Prepay future play expenses	1,328
HSBC Savings Account	14,739
HSBC Money Market	-
Cash in hand	81
	<u>22,491</u>

CAPITAL ACCOUNT

Balance b/f	21,459
Profit/(Loss) for year	1,032
	<u>22,491</u>

Restricted funds liability 2,316.78

In accordance with instructions given to us, we have prepared without carrying out an audit, the above financial statements from the accounting records of The Windmill Players and from information and explanations given to us.



Miller Roskell Limited
Chartered Certified Accountants
17 Victoria Road East
Thornton Cleveleys
Lancashire
FY5 5HT

Treasurer's Report

Income and Expenditure

THE WINDMILL PLAYERS BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2025

Bank Rec

Balance @ 30/06/24	9,975.57
less: unpresented cheque (102386)	- 5,390.64
Add: Outstanding play income	1,698.55
Add: Outstanding lodgements	60.00

Adjusted bank balance	<u><u>6,343.48</u></u>
-----------------------	------------------------

Cash Rec

Balance b/f	178.26
Cash Receipts	1,863.97
Cash Payments	1,957.94
W/off variance	3.00

Balance c/f	<u><u>81.29</u></u>
-------------	---------------------

Treasurer's Report

Income and Expenditure / Profit and Loss

THE WINDMILL PLAYERS INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025			
RECEIPTS		PAYMENTS	
	€		€
The Corn is green		Theatre hire and commission	2,899.00
Tickets	5,340.00	Licence	499.60
Raffle	519.00	Scripts	236.81
Donations	443.10	Props, sets and costumes	277.70
		Printing, publicity and banners	280.88
		Other	200.00
	6,302.10		4,383.99
39 Steps			
Tickets	6,216.00	Theatre hire and commission	3,459.10
Raffle	556.00	Licence	489.60
Donations	119.20	Scripts	168.91
		Props sets and costumes	621.85
		Printing, publicity and banners	135.35
		Other	200.00
	6,891.20		5,012.81
We are 3 sisters			
Tickets	3,936.00	Theatre hire and commission	2,497.45
Raffle	412.00	Licence	408.00
Donations	-	Scripts	-
		Props sets and costumes	239.89
		Printing, publicity and banners	426.09
		Other	200.00
	4,348.00		3,761.43
Other receipts		Other payments	
Members subs	1,395.00	Room hire and utilities charges	6,600.00
Workshop subs	589.15	NODA Insurance	697.42
Murder Mystery	794.98	NODA membership	205.00
Donations	547.54	Donations and social	58.45
Bank interest	268.87	Equipment inc website	740.26
Restricted funds - Friends of Thornton			
Little Theatre legacy funds	2,899.78	Bank charges	82.34
other income	369.00	Other expenses	1,831.54
	6,864.32		10,215.01
TOTAL RECEIPTS	24,405.62	TOTAL PAYMENTS	23,373.24
Profit/(loss)			
Overall P&L			
The Corn is Green - Surplus	1,918.11		
39 Steps - Surplus	1,878.39		
We are 3 Sisters - Surplus	586.57		
Other receipts	6,864.32		
less Other expenses			10,215.01
Profit in year			<u>1,032.38</u>

Note to End of Year Accounts 2024/2025

Income and Expenditure Reporting

The Windmill Players' year-end accounts for 2024/2025 include all income and payments processed through its bank accounts and petty cash. In November 2024, The Windmill Players received £2,899.78 in legacy funds from Friends of Thornton Little Theatre (FTLT), which had ceased to exist. These funds were transferred to The Windmill Players with the agreement that they would be used solely for community purposes, as established by the outgoing chair of FTLT and The Windmill Players trustees.

Accounting for Receipts and Payments

The FTLT funds appear in the income and expenditure account under '**other receipts**'. In the 2024/2025 financial year, £583.00 from these funds was spent on agreed community projects. This amount is shown within '**other expenses**', listed as '**other payments**' in the accounts.

Profit and Fund Status

Including all income and expenditure, The Windmill Players recorded a profit of £1,032.38 for the year. Importantly, the FTLT legacy funds remain distinct from The Windmill Players' own funds. At year end, the remaining balance of the FTLT funds stands at £2,316.78. This amount is reflected within the current account total on the balance sheet and is also listed separately as '**restricted funds**'.

Impact of Legacy Funds on Financial Position

If the FTLT income and expenditure were excluded, and only Windmill Players' own funds were reported, the income and expenditure account would show a loss of £1,285.10.

Similarly, by including that loss in the capital account, and removing the FTLT legacy funds from the assets in the balance sheet, would result in assets and capital totalling £20,174.

Notes on "Other Expenses"

This year the expenses included all donations from the Friends of Thornton Little Theatre legacy funds, expenditure from the Lancashire County Council community fund (*The Founder of Fleetwood* production - costumes, props and publicity material), costs for refreshments throughout the year and including the Mince Pie evening, tickets for the NODA awards dinners (members pay for these but the tickets must be purchased through The Windmill Players, so this is a zero cost to us but must be shown in the accounts).

The amounts of £200 shown as other expenses in each of the productions, refers to the cost of van hire for each production.

The Total of £1831.54 shown as "other expenses" under "Other Payments" is made up of the following: -

Legacy Donations	£583.00
The Founder of Fleetwood Production costs	£700.00
NODA Presentation tickets	£369.00
Various Miscellaneous Expenses	£179.54

Directors Group Report

The Directors Group meets monthly (approximately) to discuss topics such as the choice of plays for The Windmill Players, matters concerning the dates of various performances, and volunteer directors. Also, we deal with funding and membership applications, and support for and concerns from directors.

The Group currently consists of Angela Hudson, Di Timmins, Linda Whitworth and Steve Cook, all of whom are established members of The Windmill Players.

Matters discussed since the last AGM

* Ongoing reports from the various productions (CRE8TIV Little Theatre/Workshop/Murder Mystery) as to how rehearsals and performances are going

* Support given to all directors (Angela Hudson/Roger Lloyd Jones, Colin Johnstone, Ruth White, Bernard Melling)

* Concerns were discussed as to potential clashes between rehearsals and performances, e.g. rehearsals for the CRE8TIV Little Theatre play and Murder Mystery performances. It was agreed that the main house play should always have priority. Various suggestions have been made around this, both at Directors Group and the Operational Committee, and the decision had been made that if the two directors agreed and the actors concerned were sure they could handle this, then it was acceptable to be in both.

The main activity that we have been involved in this past year is the updating of the Director's Checklist, which required much discussion and several drafts. The completed checklist has now been approved by the Directors Group and Operational Committee, and follows this report. We hope that this will clarify the issues for directors, especially those new to the task.

We also noted that there were a number of nominations this year from NODA regarding some of our actors and directors. Although none resulted in prize-winners, we felt that this was a good indication of the regard in which our group is held.

We now have directors (and some plays) confirmed for 2025-2026:
October 2025 *And Then There Were None* (directed by Bernard Melling)
February 2026 *Stepping Out* (directed by Emma Davies)
June 2026 (*play to be confirmed*) (directed by Di Timmins)
October 2026 (*play to be confirmed*) (directed by Poppy Flanagan)

We will continue working towards supporting the work of The Windmill Players, and any member who wishes to consider Directing, possibly for the first time, should come and have a chat with us!

Di Timmins, July 2025

Windmill Players Murder Mysteries Report

These have been performed once a year since 2014. The premise is as follows:

The Murder Mystery takes place in the autumn of each year, usually towards the end of September. Members are encouraged to volunteer, and the number of characters will change each year, dependent on the people who wish to be in it.

It is a collaborative piece, in that the theme is decided by the group, and the play is then written around them. The play itself is about 25 minutes long, then the actors (with the exception of whoever was the victim!) immediately go into a 'hot-seating' session, where the audience can ask any questions they wish of the actors, who must improvise their answers in character. There is then an opportunity for the audience to fill in forms with their suggested murderer and motive (whilst having refreshments!), followed by a reveal and a confession.

We normally tour local libraries (up to 7 so far), and are often asked to perform for private organisations who have heard of us.

In 2024, we produced *Death at Meadowbrook Farm* in which the farmer was 'bumped off', and in Spring 2025 *The Deadliest Game of All*, revolving around a community group hoping to enliven their local villagers by organising a social event wearing fancy dress, but getting too involved. This was an 'experiment', which was to present two Murder Mysteries in one year. Unfortunately, this cannot happen next year, as I will be directing for The Windmill Players at the CRE8TIV Little Theatre from Spring 2026. However, we will be performing *The Play's The Thing – And It's Murder!* in September/October 2025, which is set around an amateur dramatics group.

Although many of the members in this group are regulars, we will always welcome new people, and although the play is cast for this year, please keep your eyes open in around May/June 2026 for information about our next Murder Mystery, or try to see the latest one at your local library!

Di Timmins, July 2025

Friends of The Windmill Players Report

As soon as each play is cast, the Friends' Secretaries write a letter to the Friends of The Windmill Players (comprising of those formerly on our Patrons list, our Life Members and those on the Mailing List). This letter is sent out either by post or email, informing our Friends of the dates of the production with a short synopsis of its theme, and telling them that it is now advertised on CRE8IV Little Theatre's website, and how they can book tickets.

A reminder is sent out to those on email several times before each production, reminding them about booking, if they haven't already done so.

The Media Team create posters, flyers and banners advertising the new production. These are distributed to CRE8IV Little Theatre for display and to as many places around the area who will take them, including the local libraries and shops / supermarkets.

Large banners are displayed outside the theatre approximately four weeks before the run of the play.

Our Webmaster (Peter Jones) puts all the relevant information, and how to book tickets, onto The Windmill Players website, and posts are put regularly onto Facebook, advertising the play.

We are finding that the list of those receiving notification by email is growing steadily all the time – they join by accessing the link on The Windmill Players website.

We recognize that a number of our audience perhaps leave it to the last minute to book seats, and that reminders and good publicity (on social media and with printed flyers) bring in those who book seats on the night at the Box Office.

It should be noted that as a result of the June play programme this year, advertising our October production on the back, people were already booking seats for the October play before they left the theatre that same night. The decision to provide free programmes has proved to be a sound decision, as no-one has refused to be given one, and so advance publicity is paying off.

Linda Whitworth (Friends' Secretary) with Pauline Powell (Media Team)
August 2025

Theatre Workshop Report

RATIONALE.

- To ensure all members have an opportunity to learn the basic skills in performing arts through drama from leaders who have appropriate knowledge and have received relevant training.
- To support each other and create a safe space.
- To develop confidence and friendship through drama and poetry.

ACTIVITIES.

1. The Windmill Players have had a busy year. We began with rehearsals for our annual production *The Founder of Fleetwood* and this was presented successfully in several libraries and has been very well received. In June we performed at Castle view School, Lancaster to a full hall of primary school children.

2. Our research for this production also included a very interesting trip to Fleetwood Museum to meet with the staff who were most helpful.

3. Towards the end of this year we were asked by the Museum to perform some street theatre in Fleetwood based on our play. It was a lovely day, and the acting was so effective. Thank you to David Baxter for his continued advice and guidance on this historical subject. Thanks also to Mark Bowman and Mark Edmunds for their contributions to the production. Pauline Powell has been invaluable for her continued efforts to design and print the posters/leaflets. From the Workshop members it was truly an ensemble production.

4. Some of our members attended the Christmas Mince Pie Evening, with food a raffle and live music from Roger.

5. Ian Lamond is training to be a Celebrant and during two workshop sessions attendees of the workshop participated in an enactment of a South African Wedding. This formed part of Ian's penultimate assessment.

6. Thanks to Emma Davies for her guest appearances to teach a workshop session, they are always enjoyable, and Georgina and Tina for their ongoing teaching/direction on *The Founder of Fleetwood*.

NEW MEMBERS.

We are pleased to welcome some new members this year.

Thank you to Cindy, Shakira, Ian and Natasha for taking part in our production. A strong core of members has been present through the year to support and sustain its activities.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Workshop has taken approximately £600 in subs this year.
The Founder of Fleetwood donations are approx. £150.

In 2024 we obtained a grant of £700. This has been invaluable for costumes, props and two packs of shelves. Thanks to Tina and Mark for assembling them. We also gave £10 each to the car drivers for our Lancaster trip.

FUTURE PLANS.

- 1.To Maintain a high quality of teaching.
- 2.To allow opportunities for members to learn and develop their relevant skills, to include participation in future workshop productions.
- 3.To help members improve their confidence and presentation skills.
- 4.To encourage new members to join and try to build up the membership.
- 5.To establish a YouTube channel which will be used for documenting performances and improving skills in various aspects of amateur theatre.
- 6.To revise the payment system to allow more flexibility to the members when paying their weekly subscriptions.

Thank you to all the volunteers who have helped to guide us through this year. It has, without doubt been successful.

Angela Hudson
August 2025

Photo Gallery



**October Production 2024
The Corn is Green
By Emlyn Williams**





February Production 2025
John Buchan's
The 39 Steps
Adapted by Patrick Barlow





**June Production 2025
We Are Three Sisters
By Blake Morrison**

Drama Workshop Production 2025



The Founder of Fleetwood By The Windmill Players Drama Workshop



Murder Mystery 2025



The Deadliest Game of All By Di Timmins



Trustees and Operational Committee

Trustees

Chair & Trustee	Alan John Dickinson
Vice-Chair & Trustee	David Arthur Baxter
Trustee	Ralph James Cedric Lawrenson
Trustee	Diana Timmins
Trustee	Steve Cook
Trustee	Liz Danielewicz

Operational Committee

Chair:	Alan John Dickinson
Vice-Chair:	Mark Edmonds
Treasurer:	Alison Hollas
Secretary	Fern Crump
Friends Secretary	Linda Whitworth
Committee Member	Diana Timmins
Committee Member	Pauline Powell
Committee Member	Angela Hudson
Committee Member	Steve Cook
Committee Member	Tina Warren
Committee Member	Ian Lamond

Charity Registration & Contacts

Registered charity: No. 1196878

Registered address: Starlight Stage School
Holly Road
Red Marsh Estate
Thornton Cleveleys
FY5 4HH

Telephone: 07312173983

E-mail address: secretary@thewindmillplayers.co.uk

Website: <https://thewindmillplayers.co.uk>

Facebook: The Windmill Players

