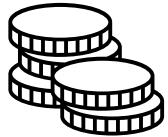


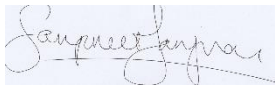


Registered Charity: 1206002



Annual Report & Accounts

1st December 2023 - 31st March 2025

| | |
|---|---|
| Annual Report & Accounts Prepared by: Emma Harrop 5th April 2025 | |
| Accepted by the Board of Trustees on 29 th April 2025 | |
| Signed by: Sanpreet Janjua, Chair On behalf of the Trustees | Signature:  |
| Date: | 29 th April 2025 |

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1. About this Report

This report is presented by the trustees of Meander Theatre Company.

The report, and the financial statements covers the period from 1st December 2023, when we became a registered charity, to the 31st March 2025. This is our financial year end.

Meander Trustees:

- follow the recommended principles for accounting and reporting for charities in the UK
- follow the provisions for Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), and,
- have prepared this report in accordance with the **Financial Reporting Standard** (effective 1 January 2019) for the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

Certain legislation such as **sections 386 and 387** and **sections 394 and 395** of the **Companies Act 2006** requires that:

- the **accounting records** of the company **comply to specific standards** as set out in the legislation
- that **financial statements give a true and fair view** of the state of affairs of the company at the end of each financial year, and,
- that a **fair view of any surplus or deficit** at the end of each year is shared.

Trustees **acknowledge responsibility** for this, so far as is applicable to the charitable company. These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies' regime.

In order to ensure that our governance documentation is accessible, an 'easier' read format has been **adopted**.

2. About our Charity

Meander Theatre Company, otherwise known as Meander, became a registered charity on **1st December 2023**.

Our **Charity Number** is **1206002**.

Our **Registered Office** is **42 Park Road, Chilwell, Beeston, Nottingham, NG9 4DA**.

We are a Charitable Incorporated Organisation; our **governing document** is our constitution. This document explains how we run our organisation.

Our **bank** is **HSBC Nottingham, 26 Clumber Street, NG1 3GA**

3. What is our purpose?

Our **Charitable Objectives** (Objects) are our core purpose; these are:

Working with learning disabled and autistic people to remove barriers to participating in and contributing to the arts, as a means to relieve their needs by:

1. providing **experiences** and **advice** to **develop artistic, creative and leadership skills**;
2. **raising awareness** of the **lived experience of learning disability and autism**;
3. **educating theatres and arts organisations** on **accessible and inclusive practice**; and
4. working for the **elimination of discrimination in the arts** on the **grounds of learning disabilities and / or autism**.

Meander **challenges audiences** and **perceptions** through **bold new performance and arts**. We:

- offer **participatory theatre arts** skill building sessions
- **devise theatre shows** with learning disabled and autistic creatives
- support learning disabled and autistic creatives in **building governance and leadership skills**
- **offer training** to theatres, and other organisation, in **accessible theatre and disability equality**.

Our **approach** is to ensure our work is **accessible** both in **delivery and governance** which includes written materials being created using Easy Read and audio versions.

Our **aim** is to **increase opportunities for learning disabled and autistic people to participate in and lead theatre arts projects**.

Our long-term goal is to **create a shift** in **how disabled artists**, particularly learning disabled and autistic creatives, are **valued within the sector and beyond**; and, to **bring about change** by addressing mainstream knowledge gaps, **ensuring a space** for those with **lived experience to advocate and represent for themselves**.

4. How is Meander governed and managed?

Our **Board of Trustees** meet quarterly to review the operations of the charity and agree actions. Our **trustees** are also our **members**. Our **members** have specific powers, such as being able to change our constitution.

We have a **Steering Group**, who meet at least 5 times a year. They act as advisors to the trustees and bring a broader range of lived experience and views to decision making about our work.

We have a **Management Team**, this is made up of 3 people and includes our founders and Co-Directors, and our Producer. They support in developing the organisation.

5. Who are our Trustees, how are they chosen, what are they paid?

Our Board of Trustees has 9 spaces. We have two types of trustees; **Associate Trustees** and **Nominated Trustees**.

There are **6** places for **Associate Trustees**. These trustees are **elected** by the existing Board of Trustees. They are chosen because of the skills or knowledge that they can bring to our Board. When recruiting new trustees, we think about any gaps in knowledge or skills on our Board. First, we might approach a person that we think will bring these skills; if this is unsuccessful, we will openly advertise.

There are **3** places for **Nominated Trustees**. These trustees are selected by our **Steering Group**. They are all people who bring the lived experience of learning disability and / or autism to our leadership and governance team.

In line with our constitution all decisions at board must include at least one nominated Trustees in order to be valid.

Trustees are:

Alex Hopkinson

Jill Carter

Mark Taylor (From 28th January 2025)

Michael Radford

Michelle Holding (To 28th January 2025)

Richard Turner

Sanpreet Janjua (Chair)

Payments to Trustees

In line with our constitution our trustees give their time voluntarily and do not receive payment in relation to their duties as a trustee, they may receive remuneration for services offered over and above their Trustee duties, and **may benefit as participants** in our programmes (restrictions apply). From **1st December 2023 - 31st March 2025**, **no remuneration was made to any trustees; 4 trustees participated in projects**: access to these projects was on an **equal basis** to **all other participants**.

No expenses were paid to trustees between 1st December 2023 - 31st March 2025.

6. Who are our Steering Group, how are they chosen, what are they paid?

Our Steering Group, consists of 10 members (3 are also trustees), who have lived experience of learning disability and / or autism. Members have been or are currently participants / beneficiaries on our programmes. They act as advisors for the Management Team and Board of Trustees.

The **Steering Group** offer time in a **voluntary capacity** and did not receive any payments for services or expenses for the period between 1st December 2023 - 31st March 2025.

Reflections from our Steering Group on activities 1st December 2023 – 31st March 2025

Steering Group members have enjoyed being part of the Steering Group and being able to be a Trustee. Members have enjoyed working with different people in person or on ZOOM, hearing about the projects that we are working on and thinking about ways to help people join in and encouraging people to grow in confidence. They have enjoyed being with friends and staying connected, having opportunities to take on work experience paid and voluntarily, and in being part of Playhouse Platform.

They feel proud of the productions that have been created with Sheffield Launch Pad and Playhouse Platform and to be able to support venues to be more accessible for learning disabled and / or autistic people, including making sure there is BSL signer at sessions. They are proud of the approach to our work, the adaptability of the members and the way members support each other in sessions and in performances and the confidence that our projects have given people. They feel proud of our association with Nottingham Playhouse and have enjoyed working more collaboratively with the Participation team.

The group look forward to seeing how what we do next and to being part of making this happen as a Steering Group member, with opportunity also to be a Trustee.

7. What staff do we have, who are they and how are they paid?

Meander operates on **project-to-project basis**. There are **no paid employees**.

Trustees **contract** facilitators, access support workers and BSL interpreters on a **self-employed basis to deliver specific services**.

Payments are **made** in line with a **pay structure** that is **agreed and monitored by Trustees**. This is **based on industry standards** and is **reviewed** on an **annual** basis.

We have a **core management team**, which includes the **Co-Directors** and company founders, and a **Producer**. They are paid for the work that they facilitate on projects. They also offer significant time in a voluntary capacity to support in organisational development, administration and compliance and ensuring inclusive leadership and governance. The **core management team** have **authority and responsibility** from the trustees to **plan and direct** the **activities** of the **charity**. In the **period 1st December 2023 – 31st March 2025** **renumerations** totalling **£11,060** were **paid** to the **core management team** of the charity.

8. Managing risks to our Charity

Trustees have a duty to identify and review things that could be a threat to the future of the Charity.

A **risk register** is in place with identified measures to reduce risk. This is reviewed at least annually, or if circumstances arise that could bring a change to our operations.

9. What activity has happened since 1st December 2023?

- We became a Charity!
- We continued to provide Board Access Consultancy to LEVEL Centre; paperwork has been adapted to be more accessible and the Board Members that we support are increasingly confident in their roles.
- Playhouse Platform (Nottingham Playhouse) The group presented a very successful performance at the end of the Summer Term 'Ssh!', addressing theme of secrets and lies. Participants all contributed to the final script and worked well as a company to devise scenes and develop characters. Our collaboration with Nottingham Playhouse continues to grow and we were pleased to support the theatres involvement with the Arts Council of England funded Transforming Leadership Scheme. The Playhouse Platform group continues at capacity and has a waiting list. Consideration is being given to how we meet demand.
- We successfully applied for a bursary with Nottingham Puppet Festival to further develop the puppets from a previous working piece 'I Come from!', a piece depicting bullying and hate crime in the workplace. Sessions took place at City Arts, Nottingham and a group of 7 learning disabled creatives worked with our team to develop their puppetry and spoken word skills. Culminating in a well-attended sharing event in June 2024.
- We were commissioned for a second year to work with Sheffield Crucible on the Launchpad Project, working with a group of learning-disabled creatives. Participants devised and performed a piece 'Total Ripple Effect' in June 2024. There were 2 sell-out performances.

The piece used themes from a script written for the Crucibles Young Company on time travel and the consequence of travelling back in time and changing history. We negotiated an opportunity for a learning-disabled Creative Assistant, commissioned by Meander, to work alongside the Director. This has been a very successful addition to the project. A BSL interpreter was employed for performances and additional rehearsals and audio descriptions and captions were part of the show from the start, fully supported by Sheffield Crucible.

10. What are our future plans?

The coming year is an exciting one. Playhouse Platform continues and we are working towards performances at Nottingham Playhouse and as part of OneFest, Mansfield in July 2025.

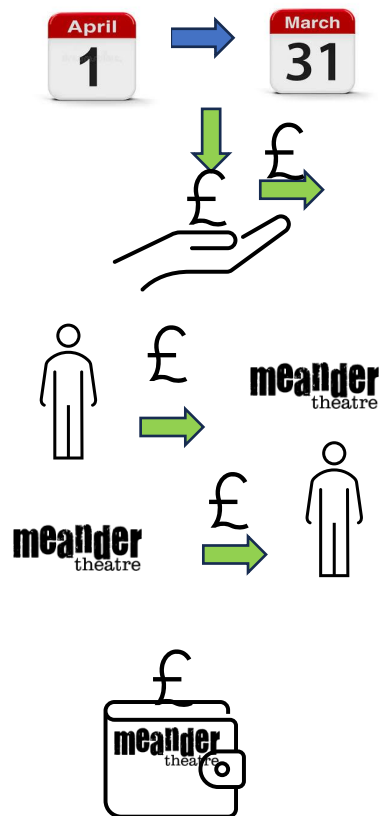
Our partnership agreement with Nottingham Playhouse continues into 2026 and there are strong indications that the LEVEL Centre, would like to commission us for another year.

Alongside our commissioned work, and as a result of becoming a registered charity, we look forward to further developing our own project ideas, working with the Steering Group to design programmes that will:

- meet identified gaps and needs
- provide more opportunities and progression routes for learning disabled and / or autistic people to access artistic and cultural activities and to explore their own creative potential
- allow us to work with a broader range of partner organisations, as well as building on existing partnerships.



11. The finances: About the accounts



Our financial year **starts** on 1st April.

It **ends** on 31st March.

The annual accounts tell us about the **Income** (money we received) & **Expenditure** (money we spent) during a financial year.

The annual accounts also include information on:

Debtors - these are people or organisations that owe money to us

Creditors - these are the people or organisations that we owe money to

&

Reserves - this is any money that we have left over after we have paid out what we need to for the year; charities are allowed to keep reserves.

Reserves can be **restricted** for specific reasons or **unrestricted** available for allocation for any purpose agreed by the Trustees.

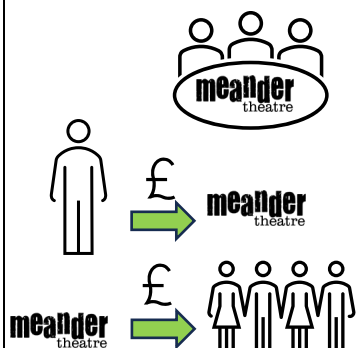


11. The finances: financial accounts for

2023



2024



On 1st December 2023, Meander became a registered charity. On this date Meander as an unincorporated association stopped operating and a transfer of all assets was made.

The **balance** transferred was **£2363.32**

We inherited one **debtor**, with payment of **£600.00** owed for work September – October 2023; this payment was received in January 2024.

We inherited four **creditors**, with payments totalling **£1300.00** owed for work completed to 30th November 2023.

This gives an **unrestricted opening balance** of **£1663.32**



INCOME

what money did we receive and where did it come from?

From 1st December 2023 - 31st March 2024 our money came from **earned income**. This means we were paid by other charities or companies to do projects for them. The **total of earned income** we received is **£5800.00**

We **did not receive** any income through **grants** or **private donations**.

There was no money owed to us at 31st March 2024.

We have **accrued** money for next financial year (from 1st April 2024) of **£1,617.00**

This means our **total income** for **activities** delivered **1st December 2023- 31st March 2024** was **£4183.00**
This is **total earned income** minus the income accrued for 24/25.



11. The finances: financial accounts for 1st December 2023 – 31st March 2024

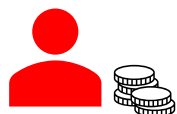


EXPENDITURE what money did we spend?

Expenditure is the money that Meander spent during the period **1st December 2023 – 31st March 2024**. We spent:

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Project Costs (artist fees, artist travel, materials) | £ 4,153.00 |
| Bank Charges (the fees we pay for a business bank account) | £ 20.00 |
| Other Costs (postage, charges for DBS check) | £ 0.00 |

This means our **total expenditure** for **activities** delivered **1st December 2023 – 31st March 2024** is **£4,173.00**

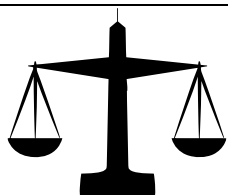


Long term Creditors / Debtors

Aged Creditors / Debtors

These are people that we owe money to or that have owed us money from before the 1st December 2023.

On 31st March 2024, we have one inherited **creditor** remaining, with **£80.00** still owed for work in July 2023.



Balance and Reserves

After we have paid the money out to the **Creditor** there will be **£1673.32** left.

This is our **unrestricted reserves**. This means the money we have left that is free for us to use on whatever we decide is needed.

This is made up of **£1663.32**, which was the unrestricted balance transferred on 1st December 2023, plus **£10.00**, the difference between our **income** and **expenditure** from 1st December to 31st March 2024.



11. The finances: financial accounts for

April
1
2024



March
31
2025



INCOME
what money did we
receive and where
did it come from?

Income is the money that Meander receives during the **financial year**. In the financial year that ended 31st March 2025 our money came from **earned income** and **private donations**.

Earned Income is the money we were paid by other charities or companies to do projects for them. The total of **earned income** we have received is **£6,600.00**

Private donations is income we were gifted by individuals. The total **private donations** we received is **£30.00**

We **did not receive** any income through **grants**.

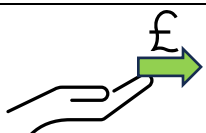
We had **accrued income**, that means money that we received in the last financial year (2023/2024) for work that was planned to take place after 1st April 2024. We had **accrued income** of **£1,617.00**

We have one **Debtor**; they owe **£750.00**.

We have no **accrued** income for the next financial year.

This means our **total income** for **activities** delivered in **2024/25** was **£8997.00**.

This is earned income + private donations + debtors 24/25 added to income accrued in 23/24



EXPENDITURE
what money did we
spend?

Expenditure is the money that Meander spent during the **financial year**. We spent:

Project Costs (artist fees, artist travel, materials) **£ 7,437.82**

Bank Charges (the fees we pay for a business bank account) **£ 60.00**

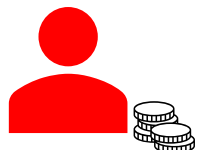
Other Costs (postage, charges for DBS check) **£ 0.00**

We have **Creditors** (people we still need to pay) of **£ 1,360.00**

This means our **total expenditure for 2024/25** is **£8,857.82**



11. The finances: financial accounts for 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025



Long term Creditors / Debtors

Aged Creditors / Debtors

These are people that we have owed money to, or that have owed us money for a long time.

On 1st April 2025 there are **no** Aged Debtors and **no** Aged Creditors.



Balance and Reserves



When we have received the money owed from our **Debtors** and when we have paid the money out to **Creditors** there will be **£1812.50** left.

This is our **reserves**. This is made up of **£1673.32**, which was last year's reserves **plus £139.18**, the difference between our **income** and **expenditure** from this year.

Restricted Reserves: The Trustees hold **£500.00** as **restricted** reserves; this is money held to underwrite project costs and bank costs in the event that we had to stop working.

Unrestricted reserves: This means the money we have left that is free for us to use on whatever we decide is needed. At 31st March 2025 we hold **£1312.50** in unrestricted reserves.

12. Independent Examination

Independent Examination, is when a suitably qualified person, who is not connected with the charity, looks over the accounts to ensure that they meet the relevant standards and that they present a true, fair and accurate picture.

Charities that have a turnover (income) of less than £25,000 are not required by the Charity Commission to have their accounts independently examined.

As our turnover does not meet the threshold of £25,000, we do not need an Independent examination for the financial year 2024/2025.

13. Going Concern Basis

After reviewing the proposed activities, the financial picture and the projections for the coming year, the **trustees** have a **reasonable expectation** that the charity has sufficient resources to continue to operate for the foreseeable future.

The charity therefore **adopts** the **going concern basis** in preparing the financial statements.