

Camden Acting Workshop

Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the period 13 December 2023 to 31 March 2025

Charity registration 1206166

Reference and administration details

Charity name	Camden Acting Workshop		
Other names charity is known by	N/A		
Registered charity number (if any)	1206166		
Charity's principal address	Flat 49 Monmouth House		
	Raglan Street		
	London		
	Postcode	NW5 3BX	

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Joe Earle	Chair		
2	Benjamin Cawley			
3	René Mohandas			
4	Denise Largin			
5	Jacqueline McIntosh		Appointed 02/04/2025	

Volunteer Artistic Director

Andy StJohn

Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Constitution
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	Foundation Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	Appointed by the existing charity trustees

Camden Acting Workshop is a foundation charitable incorporated organisation administered by a board of trustees and governed by its foundation constitution dated 4 December 2023. It was registered with the Charity Commission on 13 December 2023.

The founding trustees are appointed for a mix of three and four year terms to ensure that all founding trustee terms don't end at the same time. Apart from the founding trustees, all trustees are appointed for a term of three years by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the charity trustees. A charity trustee who has served for two consecutive terms may not be reappointed for a third consecutive term but may be reappointed after an interval of at least one year. The minimum number of trustees permitted under the constitution is three, and the maximum number is twelve.

The trustees of Camden Acting Workshop perform the usual duties of trustees, including appointing and managing the voluntary Artistic Director, setting the strategy, and ensuring compliance with financial and other obligations.

During this financial period, Camden Acting Workshop recruited an additional trustee. The Board now consists of five trustees. The new trustee is a long-term resident of Camden, a regular member of Camden Acting Workshop's Monday night workshops, and a practicing lawyer bringing a valuable range of knowledge, skills, and experience to the Board.

Risk management

The board of trustees and key management personnel have a rigorous approach to risk management, and the key risks facing the organisation are reviewed on an ongoing basis, with mitigating actions put in place to minimise the ongoing risk to the charity. During this period, the Board conducted a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis to identify the key risks facing the charity and actions we can take to mitigate them. Key risks we have identified and are working to mitigate include unplanned loss of key volunteers, ensuring enough capacity for organisational development and administration, and not securing enough funding to cover ongoing operating costs.

Objectives, activities and achievements

The Board of Trustees submit their first annual report and the financial statements of Camden Acting Workshop for the period from 13th December 2023 up to 31st March 2025.

The Board of Trustees confirms that the annual report and financial statements of the Charity comply with current statutory requirements, including the Charity Act 2011.

The trustees have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Charity's objectives and activities, and when planning activities.

Camden Acting Workshop's charitable purpose is 'for the public benefit to advance public education and appreciation of the performing arts, in particular but not limited to the arts of theatre and dramatic improvisation.' Dramatic improvisation is the art of creating stories and dramas spontaneously through acting and narrative skills.

Camden Acting Workshop provides rigorous education in dramatic improvisation for professional and non-professional actors. This includes practical and theoretical training in developing character, narrative, story, structure and dramatic situation building to dramatic climax with a resolution.

Camden Acting Workshop puts on performances of dramatic improvisation in theatres and community spaces which are co-created by audiences and actors. Actors ask audiences what they want to see a show about and respond to what comes up.

The Board is enormously proud of what the charity has achieved in its first sixteen months as set out in the report below. Despite the challenges of setting up a new organisation in the wider challenging environment we have begun to lay strong foundations that we can build on going forward. The testimonial below from a participant of Camden Acting Workshop for us really captures in a nutshell the ethos of what the charity is and will build on in coming years.

Camden Acting Workshop is a wonderfully creative, diverse, warm and supportive group of people, committed to pushing the boundaries of acting.

All of Camden Acting Workshop's activities are delivered by volunteers. The trustees would like to take this opportunity to extend its thanks to all our volunteers and particularly our volunteer Artistic Director Andy St John. The trustees would also like to put on record their thanks to all the partners we have worked with across Camden, particularly the Old Diorama Arts Centre, which has provided us with free space for workshops and performances, and Voluntary Action Camden which has provided free training and support with policy development.

In our first sixteen months, our activities have included:

Monday Open Workshops

We run a weekly open workshop in Dramatic Improvisation for adults at The Old Diorama Arts Centre in Euston. The workshop began in April 2024, following an article in the Camden New Journal. We started with ten participants with little or no acting experience. We worked every Monday evening and in July 2024 gave our first open performance to thirty invited friends and family. The performance was accompanied by live music and afterwards we shared light refreshments.

In the autumn of 2024, the group grew to fourteen regular members. We gave another open performance in December 2024 to forty people at the Clarence Hall in Kentish Town. This performance was more ambitious in scale and structure and was accompanied by live music. Again, we provided refreshments afterwards.

In the spring of 2025, we gave monthly open performances to small audiences in our regular space at the Diorama theatre. Participants included members of the group and professional actors. The season finished with our most ambitious performance yet at the Clarence Hall in Kentish Town. Throughout, all workshops and performances have been provided for free.

Below we share some testimonials from regular participants of the Monday night workshops in their own words:

For me, Camden Acting Workshop is a place of expression, connection and creativity. Under the sensitive and knowledgeable direction of Andy St John, we explore and develop original scenarios through improvisation. Three hours of magic once a week in a bewildering world. I am very fortunate.

Camden Acting Workshop has been a gentle and healing space for me, helping me process difficult experiences while growing as an actor. Its openness and accessibility have been genuinely supportive for my mental wellbeing.

Attending Camden Acting Workshop has been one of the highlights of the past year for me. It helped a lot with building up my confidence both on and off stage. It has been very supportive for my mental health.

The experience of improv acting with Camden Acting Workshop is a new world to explore. The focus is taught to us by Andy and all of days/ life's worries or aches and pains disappear magically it seems when acting. Concentration on your acting partner and responding and reacting. Not only gives relaxation benefits but I've found in daily life I have better listening skills and insights and understanding of the other people – things I would not have got otherwise.

Inclusion is a word which often describes a society's intention rather than its reality. Camden Acting Workshop has inclusion built into every fibre of its activity.

Camden Acting Workshop has made a lot of big and small changes in my life over the last 18 months. I've started socializing again and have more consistent confidence.

If someone had said to me you will be performing on stage with others, to a high professional standard, in the moment, making it up as you go along and actually loving it 2 yrs ago I would have thought - what planet are you from!!!

Outreach Workshops

We have partnered with two community organisations in Camden to give workshops at their venues. These include:

- Primrose Hill Community Association: In the autumn of 2024, we gave three Wednesday evening workshops at Primrose Hill working with 12 people. We did another three in March 2024 and are planning another three in June. In June, the workshops will include an open performance. These are free or participants can make a donation if they wish.
- Castlehaven Community Centre: In the autumn of 2024, we gave three "acting for confidence" workshops at Castlehaven Community Centre. These are part of their Health and Wellbeing program.

In March we ran another three workshops and are planning three more in the summer. In total we have worked with 18 people, many of whom attended regularly.

Below we have included a few testimonials from participants of the outreach workshops, in their own words:

My wife was already a participant in Camden Acting Workshops when I joined. Seventy-six years old and apprehensive, I was painlessly subsumed into a process of learning and becoming which I would love to continue and will never forget.

When my partner of 44 years died nearly three years ago, I never thought I would find a totally new interest in life. Learning the art of improvisation with Andy has been an inspiring, exhilarating, challenging and life-enhancing experience.

Online Workshop for Professional Actors

We run weekly workshops for professional actors wanting to develop skills in dramatic improvisation. We have a group of eight actors who work during our two seasons in both larger and smaller groups. We work with actors across the UK and an actor in Pakistan. Below, two participants talk about their experience of the work:

I am a working-class actor from Coventry. Camden Acting Workshop gave me an opportunity to explore experiences, issues and themes close to my own roots in a live setting.

I love working with Camden Acting Workshop. To me, it offers the chance for diverse people to enjoy a supportive, creative group environment.

Musicians Workshops

Music is important for dramatic improvisation because it helps the actors' structure and pace scenes. In the first sixteen months we ran three workshops for musicians. We have also worked with three professional musicians who have provided music for performances.

Slice

Slice is our latest "improvising form." It is a five handed "cabaret" theatre accompanied by live piano. It is our most popular and accessible form yet and acts as a shop window for the work of Camden Acting Workshop. We began rehearsing Slice in February 2025 and our first performance took place just after the financial year ended in May 2025. We have developed Slice in partnership with the London Improv Theatre.

Developing the Practice of Dramatic Improvisation

The last eighteen months have seen us develop the practice of dramatic improvisation through experimenting with different "forms". They include:

- The Three Worlds Form: A six handed form.
- Slice: A five handed form accompanied by live piano.
- Cathedral: A ten handed performance played in the round with live music.
- Semi structured two/three handlers: A physical structure is prepared before the performance.
- Guided group improvisation: Larger scale improvisation supported by narration and side coaching.

We are also working with an experienced professional actor in weekly online sessions trying to simplify and clarify the foundations of dramatic improvisation.

Film Collaboration

We are working regularly with a film maker and actor on a project using dramatic improvisation to develop narrative for film. The filmmaker is a researcher for the University of Exeter and is doing a PhD on using dramatic improvisation as a method of filmmaking.

Communications

We have invested in developing a logo and branding for Camden Acting Workshop as well as a website which details our history and our current work: www.camdenactingworkshop.com. We regularly post performances and workshops on our Facebook and Instagram pages. We have a good relationship with Dan Carrier, a journalist at The Camden New Journal. He wrote a feature about Camden Acting Workshop sharing the opportunity for residents of Camden to join the regular Monday night workshops.

Organisational Development

We have invested in our organisational development in our first sixteen months. We are a member of Voluntary Action Camden, Independent Theatre Council, and National Council for Voluntary Organisations, and have drawn on them to access training and expert advice on policy development.

Our voluntary Artistic Director attended training at Voluntary Action Camden on safeguarding for children and vulnerable adults and working with volunteers. We have developed our safeguarding policy and practice for vulnerable adults and children with input from the expert trainer at Voluntary Action Camden. These policies have been discussed extensively at Board meetings during their development. We approved our safeguarding vulnerable adults policy on 2nd April 2025, and plan to formally approve our safeguarding children policy later in the 2025-26 financial year. We have also nearly finalised our volunteer policy and complaints procedure. In the 2025-26 financial year, the Board will explore how it can speed up development of the policies and processes needed for a new charity while maintaining our focus on the rigor, quality and strong implementation of new policies.

Projects in development

We have also begun developing the planning and partnerships for exciting new projects including:

- **Acting Assemblies:** This project will use Dramatic Improvisation to bring communities together to explore an important subject e.g. police, young people, local councilors and youth workers exploring knife crime. We are in conversation with the Principal Participation Officer at Camden Council about a partnership to run a pilot acting assembly.
- **Into the estates:** We are conscious there are communities in Camden who do not feel able to come to workshops or performances, even if they are happening on their doorsteps. We want to address this!
- **Young Slice:** Funded by Camden Giving and working with the Youth Service we want to run workshops with young people (18 – 25) across the borough with the long-term aim of creating a “Young Slice”.
- We are in discussion with Your Bike Project about running workshop for the young people who use the project.
- We are working on developing “64 lessons in dramatic improvisation”. This is a set of shareable written lessons that can be posted on our Facebook and Instagram pages.

Plans for 2025/26

Our plans for the 2025-26 financial year include:

- Running regular performances of Slice at the Libra Bar in Camden and building an audience around it.
- Running regular open performances for our Monday group to give them experience of working with an audience and to bring community together.
- Developing a “women only” workshop where the women can play men and women.
- Putting on larger scale community performances at the Clarence Hall.
- Developing a partnership with Your Bike Project.
- Continuing outreach workshops at Primrose Hill and Castlehaven Community Centres.
- Inviting participants from the outreach workshops to be part of the Clarence Hall performances.
- Continuing to develop our key organisational policies and processes and investing in our governance.
- Securing funding to support organisational development and new project development.

Financial review

During the financial year, Camden Acting Workshop ran on an almost entirely voluntary basis. All activities were delivered by volunteers, mainly the volunteer Artistic Director Andy StJohn, none of whom received any remuneration. All workshop and performance venues were provided on a pro bono basis either as part of a community programme (Diorama Arts Centre as part of their Camden Collaborations group) or in return for us delivering free workshops for their communities (Primrose Hill and Castlehaven Community Centre).

During the financial period, we received a small number of individual donations which we spent on key areas of organisational development including logo and brand development and a website. Our expenditure equalled our income and our funds at year end were 0. Camden Acting Workshop has no assets or liabilities.

We have built a good relationship with Camden Giving in the 2025-26 financial year we will prioritise securing a small amount of regular funding from them and other potential funders which will allow us to cover the modest running costs of our mainly volunteer and pro bono model of operating.

The trustees have reviewed the guidance and based on the charity's level of income and expenditure, have opted to prepare our basic receipts and payments accounts. We used the CC16a pro forma accounts and have included them below. We have decided that an independent examination is not necessary.

Reserves policy

As a charity with very little income or expenditure and no assets or liabilities, the Board have judged that creating a reserves policy is not a key priority for the organisation at this point. However, the trustees will continue to review the situation and ensure that a reserves policy is in place when it is needed.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)	J. Earle
Full name(s)	Joe Earle
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair
Date	28/01/2026

Financial Statements

Charity Name
Camden Acting Workshop

No (if any)
1206166

Receipts and payments accounts

For the period
from

Period start date
13/12/2023

To

Period end date
31/03/2025

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £
A1 Receipts				
Donations	1,400	-	-	1,400
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	1,400	-	-	1,400
Total receipts	1,400	-	-	1,400
A3 Payments				
Overheads	1,400	-	-	1,400
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
Sub total	1,400	-	-	1,400
Total payments	1,400	-	-	1,400

Net of receipts/(payments)	-	-	-	-
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	-	-	-	-

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

[illegible]

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B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)
		-
		-
		-
		-
		-

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name
J. Earle	Joe Earle
28/01/2026	