

# THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL

England & Wales · Charity number 1206353

## Details

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**Status** Registered

**Legal form** CIO

**Registered** 2024-01-02

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

## Contact

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**Address** 48 Rosemount Road  
Flax Bourton  
Bristol  
BS48 1UQ

**Phone** +447970748640

**Email** [office@theactorsworkshop.co.uk](mailto:office@theactorsworkshop.co.uk)

**Website** <https://www.theactorsworkshop.co.uk/>

## Activities

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**Objects:** 1. TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC, PARTICULARLY YOUNG PEOPLE, IN THE KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION OF THE PERFORMING ARTS (INCLUDING, DRAMA, SINGING AND DANCE AND THE STUDY AND PRACTICE OF SPEECH TRAINING) IN PARTICULAR, BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY, BY THE PROVISION OF COURSES, TUITION, WORKSHOPS, CLASSES, REHEARSALS, PERFORMANCES AND BY SUPPORTING THEM FOR ENTRY TO ANY OCCUPATION, TRADE OR PROFESSION ON LEAVING ANY EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT. 2. TO ADVANCE PUBLIC APPRECIATION OF THE PERFORMING ARTS, INCLUDING DRAMA, MUSIC, DANCE AND SINGING BY THE PRODUCTION OF PLAYS, AND BY TEACHING AND TRAINING ARTISTS TO ENABLE THEM TO PRODUCE WORKS OF A HIGH STANDARD.

**Activities:** The Actors Workshop Bristol offers cutting edge actor training for adults and teens, getting 80 to 90n percent of students into UK drama conservatoires every year. We offer CPD for actors, teachers and the community through workshops, short courses and performances. Scholarships and bursaries allow anyone with the necessary talent and drive to access our training.

## Classification

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- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training, Disability, Arts/culture/heritage/science
- **Who:** Children/young People

## Geography

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- Throughout England

## Finances

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Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-08-31	£128,961	£126,139	-	-
2024-08-31	£74,560	£69,443	-	-

## Trustees

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Name	Role	Appointed
ANNE ODEKE		2024-01-02
BRYN HOLDING		2024-11-22
STEPHEN CHARLES LOACH		2024-01-02
Sian Fisher		2024-01-02

**THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL**

England & Wales - Charity number 1206353

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# Accounts

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**THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> AUGUST 2025**

**Charity Number 1206353**

**THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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**THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL  
REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION  
PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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**Status**

The Actors' Workshop Bristol is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and has been granted charitable status by the Charity Commission registration number 1206353.

**Trustees**

Bryn Holding (appointed 22 November 2024)  
Anne Odeke  
Stephen Loach  
Sian Fisher

**Registered Address**

The Works  
Chatterton Street Studio  
Bristol  
BS1 6PR

**Bankers**

Virgin Money (Clydesdale Bank)  
St James Street Branch

**Independent Examiner**

Joshua Kingston BSc, FCA  
Burton Sweet Limited  
The Clock Tower  
5 Farleigh Court  
Old Weston Road  
Flax Bourton  
Bristol BS48 1UR

# **THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL**

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

### **PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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The trustees present their report and the unaudited financial statements for the period ended 31 August 2025.

#### **Structure, Governance and Management**

The Actors' Workshop Bristol is a charitable incorporated organisation registered with the charity commission on 2 January 2024 and governed by its constitution dated 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2023.

#### **Appointment of charity trustees**

1. Apart from the first charity trustees, every trustee must be appointed for a term of three years by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the charity trustees.
2. In selecting individuals for appointment as charity trustees, the charity trustees must have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the CIO.

#### **Objectives**

The charity's objective is:

- to advance the education of the public, particularly young people, in the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the performing arts (including, drama, signing and dance and the study and practice of speech training) in particular, but not exclusively, by the provision of courses, tuition, workshops, classes, rehearsals, performances, and by supporting them for entry to any occupation, trade or profession on leaving any educational establishment.
- to advance public appreciation of the performing arts, including drama, music, dance and signing by the production of plays, and by teaching and training artists to enable them to produce works of a high standard.

#### **Public benefit**

In shaping the objectives for the year and planning activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'.

#### **Activities**

The Actors' Workshop Bristol is a unique, independent and nationally recognised centre of excellence for actor training, with an unrivalled record for getting students into BA and MA courses at accredited UK drama schools. Taught exclusively by experienced professional actors, our courses and classes are priced as competitively as possible so that everyone with the talent, drive and determination to train can access them.

A recent study conducted by The Sutton Trust reported that six out of ten young people who are interested in pursuing a career in performing arts come from a family background of higher education or a professional background. The research further showed that those who come from less privileged backgrounds are underrepresented in the performing arts industry, with financial barriers being a significant factor. The Actors' Workshop Bristol seeks to

# **THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL**

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

### **PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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readdress this balance by offering bursaries/ discount whenever needed – even if this need arises in the middle of the training year.

In tandem with our rigorous training, student welfare and support are hallmarks of our work. We get to know all our students personally and care passionately about helping them make the best of every step of their creative journey. Currently, this includes paying for auditions/transport to auditions, funding access to psychotherapy when needed, supporting students who are young carers and embedding life skills lessons in our curriculum on a weekly basis.

#### **Foundation Course in Acting**

At the heart of our work is our part-time Foundation Course in Acting, which provides rigorous professional training in all the core skills required to pursue the craft at degree level. Though our stunning success rate of around 90% every year speaks for itself, our constantly evolving curriculum is designed not just to teach the professional skills needed to succeed at audition but to develop each student's creativity and understanding as an artist.

The course runs from September until June, culminating in a professional showcase at a local theatre, with an option to take part in a further Shakespeare production or theatre-in-education project in July. All students audition for UK conservatoires during the course; each year most are offered places on highly competitive BA/MA courses at top drama schools. Expert careers advice, audition preparation (including screen acting and self-taping) and exposure to professional practitioners from across the industry enable students to explore the best range of options available and to tailor their preferences for higher education to maximise success.

With a minimum of 12.5 contact hours per week on average, this course has hugely successful outcomes and is competitively priced to allow students to work part-time alongside it. All classes are taught by trained, experienced professional actors and the year group is split into training groups of no more than 18 students.

From September 2024 – June 2025 our Foundation Course was full at 34 students, mainly new participants but also including four returners, who had not managed to gain a place at drama school and came back to train with us for a further year. We awarded one full bursary, with two further students paying half fees – in all cases a response to financial hardship, enabling these students to access professional training that would otherwise have been out of reach for them. Despite financial challenges, we froze our fees for this course at £3,000 for the academic year, payable in ten instalments of £300 to make the course as accessible as possible. (Most of our students fund the course from the proceeds of a part-time job.)

Once again, our students did very well at audition during the 2024-25 academic year, gleaning 52 places on BA/MA courses at accredited UK drama conservatoires. Individual places can be seen here: <https://www.theactorsworkshop.co.uk/achievements>

Our annual showcase at The Mount Without, Bristol on 2nd June 2025 was extremely well-received; one student was offered a further place on a BA Acting course as a result of the Head of Acting from that drama school seeing her work in our showcase.

# **THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL**

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

### **PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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#### **Screen Acting Course**

This new course, running two evenings a week from September – April, was offered to help both aspiring and early-career actors gain the skills needed to become employable in film/tv. Once again, this course was priced as cheaply as possible (£2,500 inclusive of show and voice reels) and included two half-price bursaries. Headed by film-maker Paul Dudbridge and Jennifer Higham, each week was split into technical skills on a Monday and Acting skills on a Thursday. Our cohort of eight students made enormous progress throughout the course, learning key elements of their professional craft alongside an understanding of how a film set works. The course culminated in the creation of professional showreels, shot by BA film production students from Boomsatsuma (<https://www.boomsatsuma.com/>) directed by Paul Dudbridge and edited by Jennifer Higham. We also coached, directed, recorded and edited professional voice reels with our students. At the end of the course, we celebrated with a screening of their reels at a small local cinema.

#### **Industry Masterclasses**

Our industry-led masterclasses continued to be popular during the 2024-25 academic year, attracting both our own students and also members of the wider public. Our line-up for 2024-25 included: open air theatre, Shakespeare, acting through dance, Chekhov, devising, Farce and breathwork for actors – all hugely helpful skills that both augment our own students' training and offer as valuable source of CPD for teachers, actors and members of the public.

As always, these classes (led by industry experts) were cheaper than those of our competitors (e.g. Bristol Old Vic Theatre School) without ever compromising on quality, and offered deep discounts for students, Equity members, unwaged and pensioners. In addition, we always offered further reductions/free places for those who could not otherwise afford to attend.

#### **Short Courses**

Our Short Courses (3-hour sessions on a Wednesday evening) were also well-attended. As before, we kicked off the series with an in-depth look at playing Shakespeare, followed by Stage Combat and Improvisation. All were taught by experienced, qualified industry specialists. As with the masterclasses, prices were below competitors with discounts and bursaries available as above.

#### **Dance, Body Conditioning and Singing**

As before, we ran weekly Dance, Body Conditioning and Singing classes for actors aged 18+ during term time. Taught personally by co-directors Jennifer Higham (dance/body con) and Clara Marullo (singing) these are very popular with our foundation students and also attract outsiders.

#### **Teen Group**

Our small, selective Teen Group, which meets for three hours on a Sunday afternoon and serves students aged 14-18, provides younger performers who have the drive and determination to learn their craft with dedicated professional training. Most of our Teen students go on to train further with us on our part-time Foundation Course, before doing a

BA at drama school and entering the industry. The Teen Group, like all our other courses and classes, is taught by experienced professional actors and offers bursaries where needed to make sure it is accessible to ALL those with the talent and drive to benefit from the training. Although numbers were small in 2024-25 (this is a saturated sector in Bristol) we kept our

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# **THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL**

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

### **PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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Teen group running to serve our existing students, and also offered free places to two young actors referred to us through local charity Community of Purpose ([www.communityofpurpose.com](http://www.communityofpurpose.com)).

#### **Free CPD for Teachers**

This year, we offered teacher CPD online and also via school workshops, modelling best practice. Though uptake was small – teachers are overworked – we did workshops at Downend School, Bristol and also at The Space in Taunton. These included student-facing talks about pathways into the profession.

#### **Other Achievements**

We were invited to perform at the Bristol Young Hero Awards in June. This hugely popular event run by Community of Purpose and supported by a variety of local businesses, offers both awards and ongoing mentoring to exceptional young people in the Bristol area across a variety of categories.

We also nominated one of our Teen students, a refugee from Ukraine for the Learning Award. She won her category.

We did not mount a Shakespeare production this year due to insecurity about premises (see below).

#### **Premises**

Since our studio is a “meanwhile” space and our lease was finishing on 1st July 2025, our biggest challenge in the 2024-25 financial year was to secure new premises.

Our Co-Directors spent months searching for appropriate and affordable space – a big ask since we needed around 2,000 square feet in a central location for no more than £17.50 per sq.ft. Clara and Jen looked at numerous potential premises (both “meanwhile” and commercial).

They spent three months negotiating with Meanwhile Creative, who had a large, affordable space in their Willway Yard warehouse in Bedminster, Bristol BS3 – only to be turned down at the last minute because of noise concerns in respect of other tenants of the building.

They then bid on The Greenhouse in Bedminster Green, a wonderful freestanding building owned and operated by Bristol City Council. Again, this was a three-month process. The Actors' Workshop Bristol was shortlisted down to the very final round. However, the council chose the other finalist; we found out that we had not been successful during the dress rehearsal for our showcase on 2nd June.

At the eleventh hour, Zoe Sharpe, Senior Development Manager for our current landlords, Dandara Living, managed to secure us a further, final year at our current studio, since their redevelopment of the site was moving more slowly than anticipated.

Over the summer, our Co-Directors continued to work with commercial estate agent Michael Berger to look for long-term premises, and also sought the advice of veteran charity fundraiser, Nick Barton to help raise funds to facilitate a commercial rental.

During this process, our Co-Directors were approached by Stuart Wood, Head of Bristol School of Acting (BSA) a successful, vibrant and forward-thinking conservatoire in the city. Co-Director Clara Marullo had worked with Stuart Wood on BSA productions in the past and

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# **THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL**

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

### **PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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has a high regard both for him and for the ethos of the school. BSA is opening a fully funded foundation course in acting (CertHE) in September 2026. Because of our unrivalled success rate at this level, they were interested in partnering with The Actors' Workshop Bristol to deliver this.

For the charity, this was an attractive proposition, since it would secure our long-term work at foundation level, whilst widening participation by making our flagship course free at point of purchase. (As an accredited Level 4 course, the CertHE will attract full student loan funding.)

Creating this partnership would also solve our premises problem, as we were offered space at BSA during evenings/weekends at a reduced rate for all our other courses/classes.

The Co-Directors entered into negotiations with BSA during the summer, emerging with a partnership deal that safeguards our bespoke curriculum, gives our Co-Directors control over timetabling and staffing and places the charity's logo on all course and marketing materials. This was duly examined and approved by a charity lawyer to make sure that the charity's interests were protected and preserved.

This partnership, approved individually by our Board on 20th August and collectively on 25th August has now been duly signed. By securing our foundation course and solving our premises problem, we can now maintain and grow our charitable offerings in other areas. Plans include:

- An Advanced "Springboard Course" offering our signature training for those who cannot access student funding (e.g. MA candidates, international students, those who have already done a CertHE course elsewhere) and those who would rather not do a full-time course. This course will culminate in a theatre-in-education tour to local primary schools, increasing community engagement and bringing live theatre to inner city children.
- Masterclasses and Short Courses – as before but more of them....
- Screen Acting Course
- Teen Group
- Teacher CPD

Since the new CertHE in partnership with BSA will not start until September 2026, we will use the coming academic year to plan properly, so that we can continue and diversify our charitable work in line with our Constitution, safeguarding our students, our staff and ourselves; essentially giving us the best of both worlds. We will, of course, still need to fundraise - but it will be for specific, impactful projects, which are easier to measure and therefore to fund.

**THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL  
TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT  
PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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**Financial Review**

The total income generated in the year amounted to £128,961 (2024: £74,560) which is mainly generated from student fees and a small amount of bank interest.

Total expenditure for the year amounted to £126,139 (2024: £69,443) which is mainly made up of costs incurred directly from delivery of charitable activities.

For its first period ended 31 August 2025 the income over expenditure resulted in a surplus of £2,822 (2024: surplus of £5,117).

**Reserves**

The charity's reserves policy (reviewed and approved in line with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission) is active and applies from 01.09.2024.

At the end of August 2025, the level of unrestricted reserves stood at £7,939.

**Statement of trustees' responsibilities**

The trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees on ..... May 12 2026

*Bryn Holding*

.....

Bryn Holding  
Chair of Trustees

**THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL  
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT  
PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Actors' Workshop Bristol.**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Actors' Workshop Bristol (the Charity) for the period ended 31 August 2025.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Charity, 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 Charity'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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do 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.

*Joshua Kingston*

Josh Kingston BSc, FCA  
Burton Sweet Limited  
The Clock Tower  
5 Farleigh Court  
Old Weston Road  
Flax Bourton  
Bristol BS48 1UR

Date: May 12 2026 .....

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**THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL**  
**PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**  
**RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds £</b>	<b>Restricted Funds £</b>	<b>Total Funds 2025 £</b>	<b>Total Funds 2024 £</b>
<b>RECEIPTS</b>				
<b>Charitable activities</b>				
Student fees	128,680	-	128,680	74,508
	<u>128,680</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>128,680</u>	<u>74,508</u>
<b>Investment income</b>				
Bank and other interest	281	-	281	52
	<u>281</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>281</u>	<u>52</u>
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b><u>128,961</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>	<b><u>128,961</u></b>	<b><u>74,560</u></b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>				
<b>Costs of charitable activities</b>				
<b>Direct costs</b>				
Wages and salaries	89,910	-	89,910	52,185
Studio, theatre and show costs	5,227	-	5,227	2,218
<b>Support costs</b>				
Travel and subsistence	507	-	507	547
Printing, postage and stationery	1,023	-	1,023	318
Insurance	600	-	600	600
IT and subscriptions	740	-	740	520
Office costs	310	-	310	77
Premises expenses	1,969	-	1,969	73
Accountancy	1,768	-	1,768	762
Heat and light	212	-	212	167
Advertising	3,565	-	3,565	3,582
Rent and rates	19,979	-	19,979	7,919
Miscellaneous expenses	225	-	225	334
Bank and other charges	104	-	104	141
	<u>126,139</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>126,139</u>	<u>69,443</u>
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	<b><u>126,139</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>	<b><u>126,139</u></b>	<b><u>69,443</u></b>
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
<b>NET RECEIPTS/(PAYMENTS)</b>	<b><u>2,822</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>	<b><u>2,822</u></b>	<b><u>5,117</u></b>

**THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL**  
**PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**  
**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**

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	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash at bank and in hand	7,939	5,117
<b>Total Assets</b>	<u>7,939</u>	<u>5,117</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accruals		
Accountancy	1,768	1,680
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<u>1,768</u>	<u>1,680</u>
<b>CASH RESERVES</b>		
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>		
Brought forward	5,117	-
Net receipts/(payments) for the year	<u>2,822</u>	<u>5,117</u>
	7,939	5,117
<b>Total reserves</b>	<u>7,939</u>	<u>5,117</u>

Signed on behalf of the Trustees on May 12 2026

*Bryn Holding*


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Bryn Holding  
Trustee

## Document Details

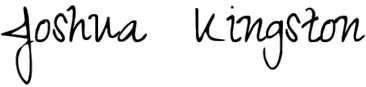
<b>Title</b>	The Actors' Workshop Bristol Financial Statements for YE 31 August 2025
<b>File Name</b>	The Actors' Workshop Bristol - Financial statements 2025.pdf
<b>Document ID</b>	f0293233ace148e98c492b620a4d3b43
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**THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL**

England & Wales - Charity number 1206353

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# Accounts

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**THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> AUGUST 2024**

**Charity Number 1206353**

**THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

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REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION  
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Anne Odeke (appointed 2 January 2024)  
Stephen Loach (appointed 2 January 2024)  
Sian Fisher (2 January 2024)

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BS1 6PR

**Bankers**

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St James Street Branch

**Independent Examiner**

Joshua Kingston BSc, ACA  
Burton Sweet Limited  
The Clock Tower  
5 Farleigh Court  
Old Weston Road  
Flax Bourton  
Bristol BS48 1UR

# **THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL**

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

### **PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

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The trustees present their report and the unaudited financial statements for the period ended 31 August 2024.

#### **Structure, Governance and Management**

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- to advance public appreciation of the performing arts, including drama, music, dance and signing by the production of plays, and by teaching and training artists to enable them to produce works of a high standard.

#### **Public benefit**

In shaping the objectives for the year and planning activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'.

#### **Activities**

The Actors' Workshop Bristol is a unique, independent and nationally recognised centre of excellence for actor training, with an unrivalled record for getting students into BA and MA courses at accredited UK drama schools. Taught exclusively by experienced professional actors, our courses and classes are priced as competitively as possible so that everyone with the talent, drive and determination to train can access them.

A recent study conducted by The Sutton Trust reported that six out of ten young people who are interested in pursuing a career in performing arts come from a family background of higher education or a professional background. The research further showed that those who come from less privileged backgrounds are underrepresented in the performing arts industry, with financial barriers being a significant factor. The Actors' Workshop Bristol seeks to redress this balance by offering bursaries/ discount whenever needed – even if this need arises in the middle of the training year.

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# THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL

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In tandem with our rigorous training, student welfare and support are hallmarks of our work. We get to know all our students personally and care passionately about helping them make the best of every step of their creative journey. Currently, this includes paying for auditions/transport to auditions, funding access to psychotherapy when needed, supporting students who are young carers and embedding life skills lessons in our curriculum on a weekly basis.

#### **Foundation Course in Acting**

At the heart of our work is our part-time Foundation Course in Acting, which provides rigorous professional training in all the core skills required to pursue the craft at degree level. Though our stunning success rate of around 90% every year speaks for itself, our constantly evolving curriculum is designed not just to teach the professional skills needed to succeed at audition but to develop each student's creativity and understanding as an artist.

The course runs from September until June, culminating in a professional showcase at a local theatre, with an option to take part in a further Shakespeare production or theatre-in-education project in July. All students audition for UK conservatoires during the course; each year most are offered places on highly competitive BA/MA courses at top drama schools. Expert careers advice, audition preparation (including screen acting and self-taping) and exposure to professional practitioners from across the industry enable students to explore the best range of options available and to tailor their preferences for higher education to maximise success.

With a minimum of 12.5 contact hours per week on average, this course has hugely successful outcomes and is competitively priced to allow students to work part-time alongside it. All classes are taught by trained, experienced professional actors and the year group is split into training groups of no more than 18 students. Our cohort of 34 students on this course for the academic year 2023- 24 amassed 45 places on BA/MA Acting courses at accredited UK conservatoires.

#### **More Context:**

Many UK conservatoires have full-time foundation courses in Acting, funded at a cost of £9,250 through the student loan company and accredited by the schools' partner universities. These courses attract students who do not make it through the auditions onto a BA course and hope that, by doing a year's foundation course, they will get in the following year. Sadly, the success rate from these courses is pitiful (less than 10%). Despite being huge earners for the drama schools, these courses do not adequately serve their students for the following reasons:

1. Because these Level 4 courses need to meet higher education standards for assessment and reporting and must not conflict with the school's BA Acting degree, the curricula are too general and are not geared towards imparting the specific skills (at the specific time) needed to succeed at audition. Moreover, the assessments required to fulfil an academic qualification (usually a CertHE) take precious time and are usually irrelevant to the audition process.
  2. Because of the high fees and low success rate, the cost/benefit ratio makes these courses an unwise bet – particularly given that they consume a year's worth of
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# THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL

## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

### PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

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student funding and create significant extra student debt. Nonetheless, they hook in countless unwitting students, who undertake these courses specifically to get into a BA course at drama school.

3. Because the real objective of these courses is to make money for the school in exchange for a CertHE/diploma, once this has been achieved, students are left in the lurch – mostly no closer to their real goal of getting onto a BA Acting course.

In contrast, The Actors' Workshop Bristol follows a different model:

1. Although our work is completely geared to imparting the skills needed to succeed at audition, we do not have a written curriculum. Instead, our team of highly experienced tutors are responsive to the individual, bringing in relevant elements of the craft and building skills as needed by the current cohort. This means that time is used incredibly efficiently and with excellent results.
2. Our course has fewer hours, costs around a quarter of the price of a full-time CertHE and gets more than 80% of students into BA/MA courses at UK drama conservatoires every year. Because fees are low and time is used efficiently, students are able to work alongside the course, emerging without any student debt.
3. We follow through with each individual until they achieve what they want. If a student does not get into a BA/MA course of their choice, they have the option of returning and doing our course again, knowing that our responsive curriculum will support them at whatever point they are in their creative journey and take them to the next level.

There are a few part-time foundation courses in the UK (none in the Bristol area, except Bath Academy of Musical Theatre – which focuses on MT and is therefore a complementary entity rather than a competitor.) All these are much more expensive and lack our success rate.

*We offer scholarships and bursaries for all courses and classes wherever needed to widen access and train those with the talent, drive and resilience required to succeed, regardless of background or income.*

**Onward journeys:** Oxbridge takes roughly 24% of eligible applicants every year; UK drama schools take around 3%. There are currently just 300-400 places available on BA/MA Acting courses at UK Conservatoires. With over 10,000 applicants, the audition process is incredibly competitive. Our track record speaks for itself. We have established a reputation for excellence and a market niche that attracts students from all over the UK and beyond: Germany, USA, South Africa, Australia, Italy, France to name a few. Students move to Bristol every year to do our course; with two conservatoires in Bristol and another in Cardiff, there are clear options for onward progression in the area.

Our flexible model serves not only students aiming for BA Acting courses but also those who have done a degree and want to pursue professional training at MA Level: there is nothing

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# **THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL**

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT**

### **PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

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around to cater for this need. We also train students every year who have done foundation courses elsewhere but have failed to get into drama school.

#### **Industry Masterclasses**

Complementing this offering and extending its' scope, we run a slate of one-day Masterclasses on Saturdays during term-time. Led by industry experts, these workshops are aimed both at our own students and at the wider public – professional actors (young and old) and teachers who want to extend their skills and deepen their practice. Our one-day workshops are well-attended and are a valuable source of CPD in Bristol for these groups. So far in the 2024-25 academic year, these included Agbo Play (street theatre from Sierra Leone) Physical Storytelling, Devising, Chekhov, Commedia dell' Arte, Breathwork for Actors and Acting for Camera with more planned later in the year. These masterclasses are popular and well-attended. They are significantly cheaper than similar classes run by our competitors (e.g. Bristol Old Vic Theatre School) and offer deep discounts for students and Equity members. In addition, we always offer further reductions/free places for those who cannot otherwise afford to attend.

#### **Short Courses**

Last year, we also introduced Short Courses: 3-hour sessions on a Wednesday evening. Short courses for 2024-25 include Playing Shakespeare, Stage Combat and Improvisation & Devising. All are taught by experienced, qualified industry specialists. As with the masterclasses, prices are below competitors with discounts and bursaries available.

#### **Dance, Body Conditioning and Singing**

We run weekly Dance, Body Conditioning and Singing classes for actors aged 18+ during term time. Taught personally by co-directors Jennifer Higham (dance/body con) and Clara Marullo (singing) these are very popular with our foundation students and also attract outsiders.

#### **Teen Group**

Our small, selective Teen Group, which meets for three hours on a Sunday afternoon and serves students aged 14-18, provides younger performers who have the drive and determination to learn their craft with dedicated professional training. Most of our Teen students go on to train further with us on our part-time Foundation Course, before doing a BA at drama school and entering the industry. The Teen Group, like all our other courses and classes, is taught by experienced professional actors and offers bursaries where needed to make sure it is accessible to ALL those with the talent and drive to benefit from the training.

#### **Professional Screen Acting**

This academic year, we have added an eight-month part-time course in Professional Screen Acting.

Aimed at actors at the start of their careers, practical course offers industry-relevant training for actors who wish to acquire the technical knowledge and acting skills needed to excel in screen work. At the end of this course, participants make individual showreels and voice reels to industry specifications, with a celebratory screening at the end.

# THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL

## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

### PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

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#### **Showcases**

Our Foundation Course students perform an industry showcase at a major Bristol venue in early June every year. Aside from being a wonderful public celebration of their achievement, this is also an opportunity for drama conservatoires to observe our students' work; over the years, several students have been moved off waiting lists and offered places on BA/MA courses at UK drama schools as a result of their showcase performance.

Our Teen students also do a showcase for parents and friends at a local theatre every year – normally in April to avoid exam season.

#### **Free CPD for Teachers**

In order to help secondary school drama teachers deliver best practice in the practical components of their curriculum at GCSE and A Level, The Actors' Workshop Bristol offers a series of free workshops for teachers every year. This year, these are on Zoom so that they will be easily accessible to as many teachers as possible.

#### **School and College Outreach**

Regular drama workshops in secondary schools/FE colleges and student-facing talks about pathways into the profession.

#### **Shakespeare Production**

In July 2023 we produced and directed *Twelfth Night* and in July 2024, we did *Macbeth* at the Loco Klub, Temple Meads. Performed by graduating members of our Foundation Course, these imaginative, professional productions made Shakespeare accessible and inclusive without compromising the verse. Each year, the run includes a free matinee for schools and local residents.

#### **Theatre-in-Education Project**

In the summer term 2025, we are planning to take a short, devised performance and accompanying workshop, on the theme of global warming, into local primary schools. This free offering will expose children in Key Stage 2 to live theatre and encourage them to make their own short plays. An accompanying activity pack for teachers will support further in-school work.

#### **Activities and achievements**

After a long application process, The Actors' Workshop Bristol became a registered charity (CIO) on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024, with a wonderful, experienced Board of Trustees drawn both from our own industry and from the business world. Charitable status enabled us to accept donations, raise funds, mitigate our tax burden and offset business rates – all crucial if we are to continue to develop and extend our work and our community reach, whilst keeping all fees as low as possible and supporting those who need financial assistance to access our services.

Once again, our **Foundation Course** students did extremely well. Our cohort of 34 students amassed a total of 45 places on BA/MA courses at UK drama schools. This number included

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# THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL

## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

### PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

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all of our scholarship/bursary students, one of whom was a care-leaver who had been told she would never amount to anything. This lovely young woman is now in her first year of a BA Acting course at the prestigious Rose Bruford Conservatoire. She is making us very proud!

Given that upwards of 10,000 applicants audition for only 300 places on BA/MA courses at UK drama schools, The Actors' Workshop Bristol once again demonstrably changed lives by enabling most of our cohort to access these very competitive and sought-after degree courses and thus a proven springboard into the profession.

As a result of their performances in our showcase at The Mount Without in June, two additional students were moved off the waiting list and accepted onto the BA Acting course at Bristol School of Acting.

Our small, selective **Teen Group** expanded to 17 students, of whom one had a full scholarship and another a half-fees bursary. One of our Teens is a Ukrainian refugee, who recently starred in a BBC Radio 4 drama. Since several of our Teen group were doing GCSE and A Level Drama, we offered them and their classmates free coaching on their performed exam pieces.

Our Teen Group showcase at the Bristol Improv Theatre in April 2024 included everything from Shakespeare to contemporary scenes. It was sold out and very well-received. Parents understand the value of a small group, where students are trained in their craft by seasoned professionals, and the potential for onward journeys this presents.

**Masterclasses** in everything from Clowning and Stand-Up Comedy to Shakespeare and Physical Theatre were well-attended, both by our own students and by members of the local community (at a discounted rate).

We also ran **Short Courses** (5 or 6 evening sessions each) in Playing Shakespeare, Screen Acting, Devising and Playwriting – all led by industry experts.

**Free CPD workshops for secondary school Drama and English teachers** in voice, movement, devising and contemporary text were very well received. Some comments below:

*Inspiring, hugely academically and practically credible workshop which, from the perspective of a Head of English, generated immediately applicable strategies. I was particularly inspired also by the integrity evident in the drive to reach out to the disadvantaged.*

*Some great, concrete ideas to use with our students. I particularly loved the session on fire/water/earth states in the body. Huge thanks for giving up your time for these workshops and for being so welcoming and accommodating.*

*These sessions have been fantastic, thank you so much! Great to inform my teaching practice and to developing students in a way that is more purposeful for the industry, as well as challenging them and building both my and my students' confidence.*

Once their course had finished in June, we additionally offered our Foundation Course students the opportunity to audition for our production of **Macbeth** at the Loco Klub in Bristol,

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# THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL

## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

### PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

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directed by Jennifer Higham and Clara Marullo. Set in Viking Iceland, the production incorporated a clear environmental message relating to our interaction with the natural world, which sparked conversation both within the cast and with members of our audience.

This production, which demanded a month of intensive full-time rehearsal followed by three performances, elevated every student's work. It also provided opportunities for them to explore and showcase unique talents – e.g. movement, singing, costuming, stage-management, stage combat - and extended their understanding of classical text. Not one student paid a penny to take part: The Actors' Workshop funded the whole production, with a donation of £1,000 from our landlords, Dandara Living.

We wanted to provide added benefit to local secondary schools and also to the community around our studio, which sits in the middle of a council estate. We therefore performed a special community matinee for which we offered free tickets to local residents and school parties. Some comments below:

*Wow! What an incredible production. Our Year 10s were buzzing all the way back on the coach, which is not normally our experience after a trip to see a Shakespeare play. They loved chatting with the cast and hearing about pathways into acting. The connection between human actions and environmental catastrophe was intriguing and sparked lots of conversation too. Thank you.*

*-Charlie Scherp, Head of Drama, Downend School, Bristol.*

Some general audience feedback:

*Inspiring to see a company helping to provide opportunities to very talented young people at the start of their careers. Congratulations to all those involved.*

*It was a fantastic performance and very atmospheric venue – what a brilliant group of young actors!*

*Great to see underprivileged students with talent getting the opportunity to shine. You must be very proud supporting them like you have.*

At the end of our academic year, Dandara Living took over direct responsibility for the lease on our current premises on Chatterton Street, BS1 6PR, allowing us to remain there for a further year at a greatly subsidised rent.

Over the spring and summer, we recruited a new foundation cohort of 34 students, including one student on a full bursary, two paying half fees and two returning students receiving a third off their fees for the screen acting course.

#### **Financial Review**

The total income generated in the year amounted to £74,560 which is mainly generated from student fees and a small amount of bank interest.

Total expenditure for the year amounted to £69,443 which is mainly made up of costs incurred directly from delivery of charitable activities.

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**THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL  
TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT  
PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

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For its first period ended 31 August 2024 the income over expenditure resulted in a surplus of £5,117.

**Reserves**

The charity did not have holding reserves in January 2024, due to being newly registered. The trustees have now reviewed and approved a reserves policy in line with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission (submitted with this document) which will apply from 1 September 2024.

At the end of August 2024, the level of unrestricted reserves stood at £5,117.

**Statement of trustees' responsibilities**

The trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees on ..... Apr 16 2025

*Bryn Holding*  
.....

Bryn Holding

Chair of Trustees

**THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL  
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT  
PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

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**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Actors' Workshop Bristol.**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Actors' Workshop Bristol (the Charity) for the period ended 31 August 2024.

**Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Charity, 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 Charity'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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- the accounts do 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.

*Joshua Kingston*

Josh Kingston ACA  
Burton Sweet Limited  
The Clock Tower  
5 Farleigh Court  
Old Weston Road  
Flax Bourton  
Bristol BS48 1UR

Date: Apr 16 2025 .....

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**THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL**  
**PERIOD ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**  
**RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds £</b>	<b>Restricted Funds £</b>	<b>Total Funds 2024 £</b>
<b>RECEIPTS</b>			
<b>Charitable activities</b>			
Student fees	74,508	-	74,508
	<u>74,508</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>74,508</u>
<b>Investment income</b>			
Bank and other interest	52	-	52
	<u>52</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>52</u>
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<u><u>74,560</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>74,560</u></u>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>			
<b>Costs of charitable activities</b>			
<b>Direct costs</b>			
Wages and salaries	52,185	-	52,185
Studio, theatre and show costs	2,218	-	2,218
<b>Support costs</b>			
Travel and subsistence	547	-	547
Printing, postage and stationery	318	-	318
Insurance	600	-	600
IT and subscriptions	520	-	520
Office costs	77	-	77
Premises expenses	73	-	73
Accountancy	762	-	762
Heat and light	167	-	167
Advertising	3,582	-	3,582
Rent and rates	7,919	-	7,919
Miscellaneous expenses	334	-	334
Bank and other charges	141	-	141
	<u>69,443</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>69,443</u>
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	<u><u>69,443</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>69,443</u></u>
Transfers between funds	-	-	-
<b>NET RECEIPTS/(PAYMENTS)</b>	<u><u>5,117</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>5,117</u></u>

**THE ACTORS' WORKSHOP BRISTOL**  
**AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024**  
**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**

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	<b>2024</b>
	<b>£</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>	
Cash at bank and in hand	5,117
	5,117
<b>Total Assets</b>	<u>5,117</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>	
Accruals	
Accountancy	1,680
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<u>1,680</u>
<b>CASH RESERVES</b>	
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	
Brought forward	-
Net receipts/(payments) for the year	5,117
	<u>5,117</u>
<b>Restricted funds</b>	
Brought forward	-
Net receipts/(payments) for the year	-
	<u>-</u>
<b>Total reserves</b>	<u>5,117</u>

Signed on behalf of the Trustees on Apr 16 2025

*Bryn Holding*

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Bryn Holding  
Trustee