



Crompton Street

Wigan WN1 3SL

Annual Report for 2024 for the 80th

Annual General Meeting

to be held on Friday 23th May 2025 at 8pm

Registered Charity (No 251806)

WIGAN LITTLE THEATRE – SECRETARY’S ANNUAL REPORT

Report to the 23rd May 2025 for the 80th Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Also included are the minutes of the 2024 AGM

Dear Member,

I am pleased to present this report on the activities of Wigan Little Theatre during 2024, as required under the rules of Wigan Little Theatre (WLT).

In order to prepare for the forthcoming season, nominations and motions will be taken at the AGM to be approved by the membership. Nominations can be put forward for any of the electable positions in the theatre, i.e. Executive Committee, Bar and Business Managers, and trustee members of the Management Committee, including those already standing. The Management Committee will meet on the 11th May 2025 twelve days before the AGM on Sunday 23rd May 2025 to consider any nominations and motions, which need to be **submitted to the Secretary not later than noon on that day.**

An Agenda paper stating names of all nominees and any proposed motions to the AGM will be forwarded only to members whose membership is fully paid for the current year (2025).

PLEASE NOTE:- Membership will lapse if subscriptions are not paid by the end of May 2025. Facilities will be available for members wishing to pay membership fees on the evening of the AGM.

Admission to the AGM will be by Agenda paper only.

If you wish to make a nomination or submit a motion, please note the following:

Nominations

- All nominations must contain a proposer, a seconder and a nominee who are all aged 18 years or over and fully paid up members of WLT for the current year (2025)
- The nominee must consent with his/her signature.

The nomination form is available on the website or can be requested from the secretary via secretary@wiganlittletheatre.co.uk

Motions Any motions must be presented to the Secretary, in writing, not later than noon on the day of the Management Committee Nominations meeting mentioned above.

Play Selection and Casting Committee (PSCC)

- PSCC nominations for the season commencing January 2026, should be submitted to the Secretary, **in writing**, before the **June 2025** Management Committee meeting. All members aged 18 years or over are eligible to be nominated.

Officers and Trustees as at 31st December 2024

President:	Mrs M. Kinley
Vice Presidents:	Mr J Dean,
Chair:	Mrs A Woolley
Deputy Chair:	Ms T Haywood
Secretary:	Mrs K Davis
Treasurer:	Mr. D Swift
Business Manager:	Mr D Swift
Bar Manager:	Mrs L Steggals

Management Committee Members and Trustees

Mesdames: L. DonBavand, E Delaney, M Schofield,
V Teesdale
Messrs: J Churnside, J Wiswell, J Dudley, J Naughton, P Jones, R Shaw

Membership as at 31st December 2024

Life members: 93
Adult members: 59
Senior members: 48
Honorary members: 14
Junior: 62
Unwaged: 17
Total: 293

Sub-committee leaders as at 31st December 2024

Bar: Mrs L Steggals
Business Manager: Mr D Swift
Confectionery Sales: Mr J and Mrs M Naughton
Social activities: Mrs V Teesdale
House Maintenance: Mr J Churnside
Properties: Mrs E Delaney
Membership: Miss M Schofield
PSCC: Miss N Reynolds
Publicity: Mrs A Woolley
Front of House: Mr J Wiswell
Technical: Mr A Brown and Miss B Hampson
Security: Mr R Shaw
Wardrobe: Ms S Vernon

Management Committee attendances for 2024 — 12 meetings held

Name	Possible Attendances	Actual Attendances
K Davis	12	8
J Churnside	12	6
E Delaney	12	8
L Donbavand	12	9
J Dudley	12	7
T Haywood	12	7
P Jones	12	9
J Naughton	12	10
M Kinley	12	9
M Schofield	12	7
D Swift	12	11
J Wiswell	12	9
A Woolley	12	12
V Teesdale	12	9

Productions 2024—Auditorium capacity 230

Home, I'm Darling: 85.3%
When We Are Married: 96.8%
Sheila's Island: 87.7%
Cider With Rosie: 73.7%
A Bunch Of Amateurs: 73.3%
Two: 83.9%
Philip Pullman's Grimm Tales: 57.6%
A Party To Murder: 96.2%
Cinderella: 99

Dear Member,

2024 has certainly been another very successful year for Wigan Little Theatre. The season started with a bang with the wonderfully different Home I'm Darling directed by Tracey Dawson. This was followed by the very funny When We are Married. Adored by our audiences. And who can forget the epic Sheila's Island with an amazing set and actors who really suffered for their art during this production. Then the gentle poetry of Cider With Rosie from the classic novel and story based on Laurie Lee's life. A Bunch of Amateurs followed and who can forget that Motability scooter and hilarious massage scene. Next an outstanding production of TWO. A fabulous two hander. Then our Youth Theatre produced Grimm tales and this was a great success. Massive well done to our young team. Next came the spoof whodunnit, A Party to Murder that kept us hooked until the very end. Then we ended our season with another of Bill Collins's Pantomimes, Cinderella. A complete sell out as usual.

The productions also led to a plethora of NODA nominations once again.

I do want to mention the passing of Lawrence Wilson and my dear mum, Margaret Finch. Both highly talented and committed members of Wigan Little Theatre and both will be dearly missed.

We are obviously having to evolve all the time due to the much faster pace of life that we now have, so I want to thank everyone that volunteers at WLT for all the time and commitment that you bring to our theatre. Obviously this is still an area that would welcome more people. We did have a lot of interest in joining WLT in 2024 and it was great to see so many new faces on stage and behind the scenes. It has also been wonderful to see many of our youth members step into main productions and volunteer in much needed areas. That is of course the natural way that our theatre will evolve and grow.

Kind regards

*Katie Davis
Secretary*

Wigan Little Theatre

Minutes of the 79th Annual General Meeting held on Friday 17th May 2024 at 8 p.m.

PRESENT:

51 members signed the register of attendance.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from 24 members

The Chair, Anne Woolley, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the 79th Annual General Meeting.

2. Adoption of the minutes of the 79th Annual General Meeting held on Friday 17th May 2024

All present approved that the minutes were a true and accurate record.

Proposed by: John Dudley

Seconded by: Ryan Shaw

The adoption was carried.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Adoption of the Secretary's Report (previously circulated)

Proposed by: Lynne Love

Seconded by: Jenny Swidt

The adoption was carried

5. Report from the Chair of Trustees

Madam President, Friends and Members

Tonight we are 'standing on the shoulders of giants'

People who had the foresight and determination over the years to provide and create a theatre like ours, which has become a watchword for great entertainment in the Borough.

Together, we're charged with carrying on that legacy and I know we have the commitment to take WLT from strength to strength.

An important thing we must do tonight is to remember two people who are no longer with us.

Our dear friend, Bill Collins left us in 2023. A WLT stalwart, legendary panto dame and prolific script writer, Bill was responsible for creating Wigan's traditional pantomimes for decades.

We are fortunate that Bill has left us all his scripts and we will honour his legacy by performing them well into the future.

On the death of life member Theodore Abbott, we were surprised but very grateful to hear that he had endowed the sum of £10,000 to the theatre. A most welcome gift which will help us keep providing the kind of theatre that he so obviously loved and admired.

Instead of the usual moment of silence, I think Bill, in particular, would enjoy a rousing round of applause in appreciation of these generous benefactors.

Over 2023, our audience numbers grew back to pre Covid levels.

This is due to some stellar performances and productions, with the season achieving more NODA Awards for individuals and productions than ever before, plus a regional award for Best Drama.

I firmly believe that our patrons see an evening at WLT as a great all-round experience, from the moment they enter the doors to a warm welcome in the foyer and later, when they linger in the bar with great service and in good company.

Last year, despite a heavy schedule of commitments, cast members appeared in events and activities around the town, with three performances in the Museum of Wigan Life, plus, the cast of Guys & Dolls and the Youth Theatre took to the open air stage at the Streets Apart Festival in King Street. These kinds of appearances raise awareness of WLT and showcase the talent we have in spades.

We also held a hugely successful open day to attract volunteers, when members provided an amazing showcase of workshops showing the wide and varied jobs we all do to contribute to the success of our theatre.

On stage we have some very experienced members who share their talent with new recruits, to help them develop skills and experience and add to the talent pool of WLT

Off stage we have people who bring expertise in areas such as lighting and sound, props and stage crew, set building and painting, box office administration and hospitality.

Throughout the year, many unseen and unsung teams also work and contribute to our ongoing success. Not least PSCC, who read far more plays than we perform, and deliver a varied season with something for everyone. Then there's house maintenance, bar banking, events planning and archiving, all of which happen in the background.

As Trustees, the committee as a team, must be sure we comply with what's expected by the Charity Commission and all relevant legislation. This protects the building, the people in it and our aims for good governance.

There are far too many outstanding people to mention individually, but In short, WLT has two wonderful assets, one is this beautiful heritage building we have the honour of preserving, the other is the people who love it.

The time given by volunteers is incalculable. The loyalty and support of our patrons, immeasurable.

There's no doubt that we still face challenges. The cost of living crisis is still with us in terms of energy bills, maintenance and essential repairs. Licences and essentials we need to stage a production increase year on year, so it is important that we all try to keep costs down, without stunting our ambitions.

I would like to thank you all for your hard work, dedication and support.

Long may we continue to work together to keep WLT at the centre of Wigan's artistic and cultural life.

6. Treasurer's Report

Madam President, fellow members of Wigan Little Theatre. I am pleased to present the Financial Statements for the year ending 31st December 2024. There is much to say, and I will endeavour to answer any questions you might have at the end of my report.

Thank you to the management committee for their ongoing support. I also give grateful thanks to our accountants Hull Jady for their help throughout the year. We have established a strong and productive working partnership which greatly benefits the theatre in its day-to-day activities.

The necessary change in the 2025 season ticket structure was sympathetically received and well understood by our patrons. I am pleased to report that we were able to freeze general admission prices for all the shows in the coming year, aside from the musical which has higher production costs and additional performance royalties.

We will be undertaking further vital and costly improvements in 2025, so it is essential we continue delivering high quality shows which are both artistically and financially successful.

The Amazon Business Account continues to work well. It helps to ensure timely and cost-effective purchase of production props, costumes and more general-purpose items.

I turn to the headline figures for the year. As you can see from the annual accounts, primarily due to the urgently needed building work being undertaken, there was a deficit of £9,645 on a turnover of £256K. However, it is very pleasing to see the audience numbers steadily return to pre-pandemic levels. The annual pantomime was again enormously successful and a superb way to end 2024.

Simplified new gas and water contracts have been negotiated via the same specialist broker employed by the theatre in previous years. The theatre now pays on usage, via direct debits, due to a combination of smart meters and accurate regular readings for all utilities being supplied on request.

I thank our caretakers and cleaners for their sterling work throughout the year. I also acknowledge the tremendous commitment of all volunteers who support the theatre and keep it moving forward.

I will now take any questions from the members.

I would therefore like to propose that the financial report for 2024 be formally adopted by this meeting.

6.Election of Officers and Management Committee

New committee members

Peter Jones, John Churnside, John Naughton, Ryan Shaw

Officers:

President:	Margaret Kinley
Chair:	Anne Woolley
Treasurer:	David Swift
Deputy Chair:	Tara Haywood
Secretary:	Katie Davis
Vice President:	Jack Dean
Vice President:	Margaret Finch
Vice President:	Vacant
Bar Manager:	Louise Steggals
Business Manager:	David Swift

Management Committee members:

Linda DonBavand
Paul Dawson
Tracey Dawson
Elaine Delaney
John Dudley
Maureen Schofield
Veronica Teesdale
Joey Wiswell

8. Election of Auditors

The Treasurer proposed that HullJady Accountants should continue as auditors for the coming year. The proposal was carried.

Proposed: David Swift

Seconded: Anne Woolley

9. Consideration of any Motions/Rule changes

That AGM booklet can be sent out via email to save on costs

Membership will run from May to May

10. Any Other Business

A collection for Ethels' windows took place during the ballot count and Paul and Tracey Dawson received a presentation .

Charity Registration No.251806