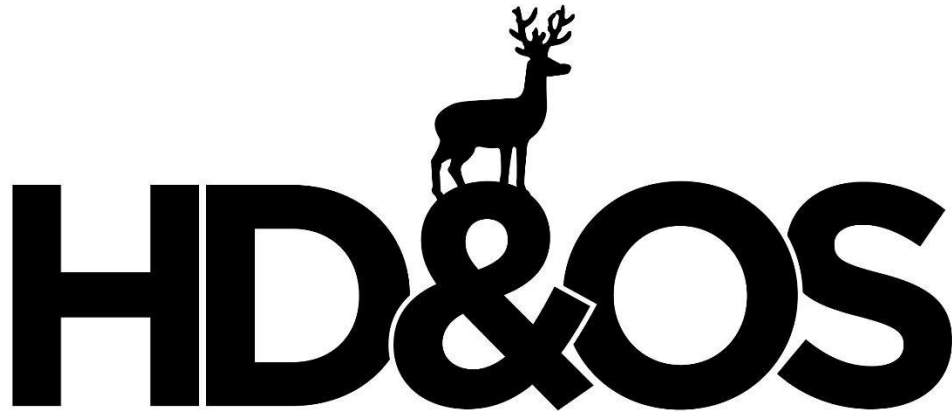




Hertford Dramatic and Operatic Society

Trustees' Report for 2025/2026 and Accounts for the year ended 31st July 2025

Contents

- 2026 AGM Agenda
- Minutes of the 2025 AGM
- Reports by Trustees on Society Activities
- Financial accounts for year ending 31st July 2025

Signed on behalf of the Trustees

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P M Lay'.

Mrs P M Lay
Honorary Secretary

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Mr C Bell
Chairman of Trustees

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**THE 107TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE HERTFORD DRAMATIC AND
OPERATIC SOCIETY WILL BE HELD AT BENTLEY HOUSE ON TUESDAY 23rd
JUNE 2026 at 8.00pm**

AGENDA

1. To confirm and sign the minutes of the 106th Annual General Meeting.
2. Matters Arising
3. To consider the report of the Trustees and sub-committees
4. To consider the Treasurer's report.
5. To elect a President
6. To elect Vice-Presidents
7. To elect the following Officers:-
 - Hon. Secretary
 - Hon. Treasurer
 - Hon. Membership Secretary
 - Hon. Librarian and Recorder
 - Hon. Independent Examiner
8. To elect:-
 - The Trustees
 - Electrical Manager
 - Properties Manager
 - Wardrobe Manager
 - Workshop Manager
9. Report on the role and function of HD&OS Productions Ltd
10. To vote on a resolution to empower the Trustees to make a rule change to Rule 10, which will change membership to an annual rolling subscription. The proposed changes are detailed overleaf.
- 11.. Any other business

NOTE In accordance with Rule 20(c), candidates for election as Trustees must be nominated by two members of the Society and nominations in writing must reach the Secretary, Pat Lay, 33 Hollybush Lane, Datchworth, Knebworth, Herts. SG3 6RE, or laypat33@gmail.com by the 16th of June 2026. The consent of the candidate must be obtained before nomination, and it is requested that such nominations should indicate the aspects of the Society in which the nominee is interested.

Proposed Change to Rule 10 (to be implemented only when MemberMojo is active for the Society)

Current wording of Rule	Proposed new wording of Rule
10 – All subscriptions shall become due on 1st September in every year and shall be paid by 1st November at which time membership will lapse if the subscription has not been paid.	10 – Membership subscriptions shall run for one year from the date of joining. Renewal subscriptions shall become due on the anniversary of that date and shall be paid within one month thereafter, at which time membership will lapse if the subscription has not been paid.

HERTFORD DRAMATIC AND OPERATIC SOCIETY

PRESIDENT Jackie Noble

PAST PRESIDENTS

Mr. P. Longmore OBE	1919/40	Mrs. D. Clark	1973	Mr. J. Fennell	2000
Mr. L. Purkiss Ginn	1945/47	Mr. F. T. B. Wills DFM	1974	Mrs. P. Steadman	2001
Mrs. W. S. Hoare	1948	Mrs. P. Sledge	1975	Mr. J. Dore	2002
Mr. P.H. Ilott	1949	Mr. G. V. Hale	1976	Mrs. P. Coyston	2003
Mrs. D. Burgess	1950	Mrs. S. Tomlin	1977	Mr. J. W. Roberts	2004
Mr. W. S. Hoare	1951	Mr. P. N. K. Wells	1978	Mrs. J. A. Laidler	2005
Mrs. P. H. Ilott	1952	Mrs. B. P. Redwood	1979	Mr. K. Morbey	2006
Mr. T. Barber	1953	Mr. J. Goodland	1980	Mrs. J. Barton	2007
Mr. W.A. L. Jackson	1954	Mrs. A. Wells	1981	Mr. G. Crossley	2008
Mrs. J. G. L. Evans	1955	Mr. P. J. Keogh	1982	Ms. M. J. Tomlin	2009
Mr. H. Wallis-Nichols	1956	Mrs. D. Game	1983	Mr. J. Laidler	2010
Mrs. A. G. Blakes	1957	Mr. S. Onyon	1984	Ms. S. Hantke	2011
Mr. E. A. Williams	1958	Mrs. M. Archer	1985	Mr. M. Budd	2012
Mrs. E. Fullager	1959	Mr. R. G. Archer	1986	Mrs. C. Nicholson	2013
Mr. E. L. Porteus	1960	Mrs. M. Hale	1987	Mr. G. Lay	2014
Mrs. E. Purkiss-Ginn JP	1961	Mr. L. Sledge	1988	Miss K. Ayres	2015
Mr. E. E. Ashman	1962	Miss J. Jolly	1989	Mr. N. Mayes	2016
Mr. G. W. Brighten	1963	Mr. R. Dapp	1990	Mrs. L. Burnett	2017
Mrs. A. M. Tidd	1964	Mrs. D. Keogh	1991	Mr. C. Bell	2018
Mr. M. V. Puleston	1965	Mr. N. Parry	1992	Mrs. P. Lay	2019/ 2020
Mrs. H. V. Mellows	1966	Miss. D. Ison	1993	Mr. N. Mayes	2021
Mrs. B. Wingate	1967	Mr. A. Coyston	1994	Miss L. Warrilow	2022
Mr. P. G. Tomlin	1968	Ms. S. Newland	1995	Mrs J. Markey	2023
Mrs. G. Wills	1969	Mr. M. K. Grewcock	1996	Mrs S. Rowley	2024
Mr. N. A. Parker	1970	Mrs. J. Crossley	1997		
Mrs. Z. Driver MBE	1971	Mr. B. Bates	1998		
Mr. H. A. Westmore	1972	Mrs. S. Bennett	1999		

VICE-PRESIDENTS

Miss K Ayres	Mrs P Coyston	Ms S Hantke	Mr J W Roberts
Mrs J Barton	Mr G Crossley	Mr G Lay	Mrs S Rowley
Mr C Bell	Mrs J Crossley	Mrs P Lay	Mrs P Steadman
Mrs S Bennett	Mr J Dore	Mr N Mayes	Ms M J Tomlin
Mr M Budd	Mr J Fennell	Mr K Morbey	Miss L Warrilow
Mrs L Burnett	Mrs S Fennell	Mrs C Nicholson	Mrs A Wells
Mr A Coyston	Mrs D Game	Mr S Onyon	

LIFE MEMBERS

Mr J W Roberts	Mrs A Wells	Mr A Coyston	Mr S Onyon
Mrs D Game	Mrs P Steadman	Mrs P Coyston	Mr R Charville
			Mrs J. Hopkins

MINUTES OF THE 106TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF HERTFORD DRAMATIC AND OPERATIC SOCIETY HELD ON TUESDAY 24TH JUNE 2025 AT BENTLEY HOUSE

Attendees were:

Ken Allford Clive Bell Sue Barber Sue Bennett Linda Budd Malcolm Budd Andrew Coyston Penny Coyston Debbie Crossley	Gordon Crossley Joan Crossley Richard Edgar Sally Fennell Anne Godwin Sue Hantke Alan Hobbs Brenda Hobbs	Graham Lay Pat Lay Jim Markey Julie Markey Nik Mayes Jackie Noble Steve Onyon Anna Palmer Derek Palmer	Sandra Rowley Pat Steadman Mary-Jane Tomlin
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Apologies were received from:

Julia Barton Clive Barton Lorraine Bottomley Liane Burnett Carol Charville	Carly Cousins David Cousins Jerry Fennell Jan Palmer-Sayer Sarah Putz	Sally Tomlin Lynne Warrilow	
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The meeting was opened by the President Mrs Sandra Rowley, who welcomed everyone to the meeting. Sandra reminded the meeting that only Full Members were allowed to vote on motions.

1. Minutes of 105th AGM

There were no amendments to the Minutes. Acceptance of the Minutes was proposed by Mary-Jane Tomlin, seconded by Julie Markey. The motion to adopt the minutes of the 105th AGM was carried.

2. Matters Arising

Graham Lay referred to Item 9 Amendment to the Rules and said that he had information to communicate on this topic but would cover it under Agenda Item 9 'Report on Charity Commission Discussions'.

3. Report of the Trustees

The activities of the Society were summarized in the reports from the Chairman of Trustees and the sub-committees which had been circulated to members with the Agenda.

Sandra then reported on her year as President.

Firstly, it had been an absolute privilege and pleasure to be President during the past year and it was still a "pinch me" moment for her to see her name on the wall above the doors at Bentley House.

Secondly, Sandra urged the incoming President to make the most of their year as it would go in a flash. Before they knew it, they would be handing over the baton, as it were, to the next incoming President.

Lastly, she promised to try to keep her report as brief as she could.

The past year had kicked off in July with the directors' evening at Bentley House, which proved very successful, enjoyable, entertaining and informative, giving an insight to productions planned for the coming year. She was also invited to Ware Musical Theatre's Summer Concert, at which they sang songs from Sondheim and Schwarz including popular favourites from *Wicked*, *West Side Story* and *Follies*.

In August she was invited to see *Wendy and Peter Pan* at Amores, Hertingfordbury, before its showing at The Minack Theatre Cornwall. A quintessential summer's afternoon, it was quite brilliant. The weather was exceedingly hot but the cast carried on in their professional way.

October was very exciting as it saw our first musical and indeed first show back at the new BEAM Theatre. It was a tremendous success – more about this later. She was also invited to Cafe Mistique organised by the Mayor of Hertford for an evening of song from various countries around the world.

November had the backstage darts match in which she managed quite by fluke to knock out renowned darts player Steve Onyon in the first round. Sandra emphasised that this would never be repeated! Tony Barber regained his championship title but not without a fight from runner-up Sally Fennell who took a game from Tony.

December saw our now annual Christmas Carol singing to various care homes in Hertford. A small cast sang to select audiences who loved having their favourite carols sung to them and even joined in the singing. She was also invited to Ware Musical Theatre's quiz night loosely based on all things Christmas. Her table didn't win but it was a fun evening. She also attended our lovely, mulled wine and social evening here at Bentley House.

January saw the return of pantomime at BEAM Hertford with *Dick Whittington*. Entertaining the Hertford Mayor and consort was most pleasurable, especially whilst participating in a rendition of "Heads, shoulders, knees and toes".

In February she attended Cherish Hertford, an event run by the Mayor of Hertford in which several members of Hertford's community gathered to have their say about their beloved town. She also learnt that there are 4 rivers running through the town – the Rib, Lea, Beane and Mimram. Whilst others present may already know this, as a "foreigner" from Ware she did not.

March saw the fabulous production of *Home I'm Darling* here at Bentley House and also Ware Musical Theatre's production of *Beauty and the Beast* in Ware Drill Hall, which was quite a spectacular show. It also included some of our own members in the cast.

April saw the equally brilliant *Double Acts* productions of *A Flock of Tigers* and *English for Pony Lovers*. Her total admiration went to every cast member in both plays for learning all those lines. These plays had gone on to great success in the Welwyn Drama Festival in May.

May saw the youth production of *We Will Rock You*, also here at Bentley House. Sandra felt that such young talent that we have should be encouraged. She was also invited to attend the NODA Awards ceremony luncheon at which HD&OS won 3 awards, 2 for *Shrek* for Best Musical and Best Production, plus Saphie Meishke won an award for the best youth performer for her part in *Sixteen*. Sandra extended many congratulations to Lorraine Bottomley and Saphie Meischke. It was a very pleasant and informative day with so many regions having nominations and winners. She also enjoyed great company on her table.

So to sum up her year, she had attended several meetings, be it Trustees or others, attended several shows (musical or otherwise), entertained many people (Mayor and other dignitaries including the Presidents Tea Party), written many reports for newsletters (including her "Beyond the boards" section) and for meetings, sat on audition panels, attended a darts match, quiz nights and award ceremonies, been to many rehearsals of various shows to give her support, continued to help backstage at shows and help behind Bentley House bar, plus managed to meet and greet audiences at front of house and gain feedback after the shows.

Life of a President was anything but tedious and mundane. She had learnt so much.

Sandra offered her thanks to Sally and her bar team for always keeping us refreshed, but most of all she wished to thank the Trustees for their continued diligence and dedication in keeping our society going and her parting gift (if people hadn't already noticed) was the new cigarette stub box on the outside mezzanine wall.

On a sad note, Sandra had to record the death on 21st September 2024 of Life Member Joan Laidler, after a long period of infirmity. Joan had been a greatly valued member of the Society who had served in a variety of roles over the course of her long membership. Her commitment and loyalty to the Society had been unparalleled. Sandra asked the meeting to observe a minute's silence to remember Joan and the valuable contribution she had made to the life of our Society.

That concluded her year in office as President and Sandra wished to say that it had been an education, honour, pleasure and most of all a privilege. She emphasised how delighted she felt to have had the opportunity to represent the Society. She said that the year had seemed to go so quickly and hoped that the incoming President would enjoy the role as much as she had.

That concluded her remarks on the events of the year.

In advance of the meeting, the Secretary had received notice that, further to the report submitted to the membership in advance of the meeting, Julie Markey wished to elaborate further on the proposed revision of the committee structure.

Julie addressed the meeting and explained that earlier in the year, we had held a special 'Away-day' meeting to consider the way in which the Society is organised and its general running. The Production Committee model was working but the workload was too heavy for one small group of people. One of the many things to emerge from the Away-day was a proposal to examine the committee structure and revise it in order to split the duties among targeted teams. This had been a high-level decision, and a meeting was planned for Monday 7th July for Trustees to discuss in more detail how these teams should be constituted. Membership had time before the meeting to consider the proposal and make known any thoughts or comments to a Trustee.

It was envisaged that there would be three new committees: a Production committee, an Operations committee, and a Marketing committee. The Production committee would have as its remit to put together a balanced programme of shows and events, appealing to both members and audience alike. The need for us to think and plan further ahead had already been identified. Show licences were being released further ahead now and often at short notice, so a degree of flexibility would always be required. The aim was to try and plan for three years ahead, acknowledging that the programme may be liable to change depending on short-notice releases. This committee would meet regularly, listen to the views of members and be aware of what shows were currently available.

The Operations committee would lead on all backstage areas, liaising with directors and Production Managers to make sure that shows could be put on successfully. The need for more people to become involved in the technical areas had already been identified and this committee would also work on recruitment in those areas.

The Marketing committee would address all areas of communication with the membership and the wider community. Communications channels develop all the time and there is a need for us to get better at it and to promote our shows and the Society as much as possible. This committee would be responsible for producing flyers, posters, social media content, website updates, press releases and any other channels of communication available.

The chairs of the three committees would meet regularly to ensure effective communication across the disciplines, whilst the Trustees would remain responsible for all of the day-to-day running of the Society. Dealing with legalities, safeguarding, health and safety, budgets and finances put a lot of pressure on the Trustees meetings so it was hoped that the three committees could take some of this pressure away from Trustees. Julie was happy to answer questions after the meeting if anyone wished for further clarification.

Finally, Julie wished to acknowledge the contribution made to the success of the Away-day by Anne Godwin who had facilitated the meeting.

The adoption of the Trustees' report was proposed by Andrew Coyston, seconded by Clive Bell. The motion to adopt the Trustees' report was carried.

The President's Award

As her final act as President, Sandra was very pleased to present the Zillah Driver President's award to a person or group of her choosing. Sandra said that there were several people who were deserving of the award but she had decided to award it to a group this year. The group was the team behind the two *Double Acts* plays, which had enjoyed such extraordinary success at the Welwyn Drama Festival, scooping a total of six awards between them. This reflected so well on the quality of shows offered by the Society. Julie Markey received the award on behalf of the two teams.

4. Treasurer's Report

The Secretary had not received any comments or questions on the accounts and Treasurer's report in advance of the meeting. Graham Lay made a few comments on his report. He stated that all shows in the 2023-24 season had made a profit, overhead costs had been stable and under control, the capital value of investments had recovered to historic levels, the drop in donations to £4k from the £11k the previous year was due to the previous year having benefitted from Sue Barber's generous adoption of HD&OS as one of the her chosen charities whilst in office as Mayor, and the amount shown against creditors had gone up from almost nothing to approximately £3.6k. There was also a substantial increase in prepayments to almost £10k due to deposits paid for BEAM hire, as well as up-front payments for *Shrek* and the panto.

Graham stressed that the accounts presented were for 2023-24 and proceeded to give the meeting an insight into financial activity during the past year (2024-25). We had done two big shows in BEAM – *Shrek* in October 2024 and *Dick Whittington* in January 2025. *Shrek* had been our most extensive undertaking financially and, whilst it had brought in ticket receipts of £45k, costs had been approximately £42k. The decision had been taken early on to go back into BEAM with a high-impact show. In view of that the budget had been drawn up with the expectation of making a loss, so the small profit was a good outcome and Graham offered congratulations to all concerned in what had been a very successful production.

Dick Whittington, on the other hand, had been a very different story. Assumptions had been made which had proved difficult to sustain and a loss of approximately £10.5k had been sustained. Ticket sales had been well below forecast and set costs had been much higher than expected.

In-house shows had continued to show substantial profit, so much of the loss from the panto had been offset. Going into next year, there was not quite such a substantial financial buffer, but it was sufficient for our needs.

Graham offered his thanks to everyone who had submitted claims with completed expense forms. He thanked David Cousins for acting as Independent Examiner again.

Anne Godwin thanked Graham on behalf of the Society for all his hard work on managing the finances of the Society so efficiently.

Adoption of the report and accounts was proposed by Penny Coyston; seconded by Steve Onyon. The motion to adopt the accounts for the year ending 31st July 2024 was carried.

5. Election of President

At this point of the meeting, it was time for the retiring President to propose the next President.

The person being proposed as President for the coming year had been interested in theatre, music, singing and dancing since her childhood and early adulthood, first treading the boards in a dance show aged 3 years old. She had joined HD&OS in 1985, being introduced to the Society by Brenda Hobbs, a long-standing member. Her first show had been the October production of *South Pacific* and she had thoroughly enjoyed performing in many shows, musicals and plays since then, with her last performance being in *Hello Dolly* in October 2004. But she had also been active in other ways too, serving behind the bar, assisting with costume changes, selling programmes and distributing flyers around Hertford town prior to productions. In the days of Castle Hall, she had enjoyed being part of the team erecting the raked seating prior to a production and helping to serve tea and other refreshments when we had our wonderful canteen during the week of our shows. She had thoroughly enjoyed being part of a theatre community and had been eager to help with whatever jobs needed doing, including washing-up or drying-up and helping at sociable clean-ups. She had also always enjoyed being part of the make-up team, having been introduced and encouraged by Sally Tomlin, another long-standing member. She had been doing this for a long time and had found it very rewarding and enjoyable, working on many plays, pantos and musicals and she had now progressed onto doing hair and dressing wigs – another rewarding experience.

It was Sandra's great pleasure to propose Jackie Noble as President for the coming year, seconded by Sally Fennell. The motion to elect Jackie Noble as President for the coming year was carried.

Jackie was handed the Presidential badge of office by Sandra Rowley and responded by saying how surprised and honoured she had been to receive the phone call from Sandra, inviting her to be our President. She thanked Sandra for all her hard work during the previous year and hoped that she would be able to do the role justice and represent the Society well. She concluded by thanking everyone for electing her and hoped she would be able to do us proud.

6. Election of Vice Presidents

The election of the Vice Presidents as listed in the Report with the addition of Sandra Rowley, was proposed by Graham Lay, seconded by Sue Bennett. The motion to elect the Vice Presidents was carried.

7. Election of Officers

The following officers were willing to stand for re-election.

Hon. Secretary	Pat Lay. Proposed by Clive Bell, seconded by Steve Onyon. Duly elected.
Hon. Treasurer	Graham Lay. Proposed by Nik Mayes, seconded by Anne Godwin. Duly elected.
Hon. Membership Secretary	Anne Godwin. Proposed by Mary-Jane Tomlin, seconded by Sue Hantke. Duly elected.
Hon. Librarian & Recorder	Penny Coyston. Proposed by Pat Lay, seconded by Sue Barber. Duly elected.
Hon. Independent Examiner	David Cousins. Proposed by Graham Lay, seconded by Penny Coyston. Duly elected.

8. Elections

8.1. Trustees

Clive Bell, Julie Markey and Nik Mayes had been elected for 2 years in 2024 and were prepared to continue as Trustees.

A minimum of 2 and a maximum of 7 more Trustees were needed to complete the committee. The following members were standing for re-election: Steve Onyon, Mary-Jane Tomlin, Sue Barber and Penny Coyston. Proposed *en bloc* by Anne Godwin, seconded by Julie Markey. Richard Edgar was standing for election, proposed by Graham Lay, seconded by Pat Lay. All elected unanimously.

A vote needed to be taken as four of these five Trustees would be elected for 2 years. After a very close vote, the following four people were elected to serve for two years: Steve Onyon, Mary-Jane Tomlin, Penny Coyston and Richard Edgar. Sue Barber was elected to serve for one year.

8.2. Election of Hon Managers

The following people were willing to stand for re-election:

Hon. Electrical Manager	Nik Mayes. Proposed by Steve Onyon seconded by Sandra Rowley. Duly elected.
Hon. Properties Manager	Lynne Warrilow. Proposed by Sue Hantke, seconded by Pat Lay. Duly elected.
Hon. Wardrobe Manager	Penny Coyston. Proposed by Julie Markey, seconded by Clive Bell. Duly elected.
Hon. Workshop Manager	Steve Onyon. Proposed by Nik Mayes, seconded by Graham Lay. Duly elected.

9. Report on Charity Commission Discussions

Graham Lay took the floor to explain to the meeting some important developments affecting the future of the Society. Events had been set in motion for which we expected to have to get membership approval at an Extraordinary General Meeting within the next few months. No decision would be required at the current meeting, so he was taking the opportunity to explain the situation to the membership to give them time to consider and ask questions.

The Charity Commission have a responsibility to ensure that all charities operate in a legal fashion. Fifty years ago, we produced a set of rules which the Charity Commission reviewed and accepted. One role of the Charity Commission is to ensure that all charities operate to a correct set of rules. Unfortunately, we had overlooked the issue that, when changes are made to our rules, we have an obligation to inform the Charity Commission. This had not been happening. We therefore had to carry out an exercise to inform them of all the changes which had taken place in the last 50 years and ask them to approve them *en bloc*. Penny Coyston, our archivist, had managed to collate all this information which had been forwarded to the Charity Commission for their approval. If that approval is forthcoming, then we would be back to a regularised state. This is of critical importance, as we wish to make further changes to the way the Society is constituted.

Charities come in different forms – ours is an unincorporated association (effectively a club). We recently became aware of something called the Theatre Tax Rebate (TTR), a government scheme by which organisations engaged in artistic endeavours can get tax rebate. Using *Shrek* as an example, Graham had spoken to a professional body who said that we would have got a rebate of approximately £8k on that show – a significant amount of money. One of the conditions of eligibility is that you have to have the correct charity structure. This can take one of two forms:

1. A Charitable company
2. A Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

The second was not available when we became a charity 50 years ago, having only been introduced in 2011. It was introduced by the government to enable non-profit charities to operate commercial services. We cannot claim TTR under the terms of our current structure. There are three options open to us:

1. To set up a subsidiary company to manage productions. Graham is not in favour of this option as it represents an unnecessarily complex structure which he would not wish to bequeath to future Treasurers of the Society. It would mean dealing with two different organisations – the Charity Commission and Companies House.
2. To set up as a charitable company. This would be a difficult conversion process and we would not be eligible to claim Gift Aid, which brings in a substantial amount of money. For this reason, Graham had rejected this option.

3. To convert the Society to a CIO. In Graham's opinion, this represented the best option enabling us to benefit from TTR. NODA had made this change a few years ago. If we were to be establishing our Society today, this is the structure we would choose. The Company of Players (CoPs) did this when they moved to becoming a charity a couple of years previously. Graham had had discussions with people from CoPs regarding the procedure.

The move from our current framework to a CIO would not be a particularly difficult process and presented other benefits. It provides a better business framework, it has legal status, so authorised members can sign contracts. At the moment, when we sign contracts with BEAM for example, we are signing as individuals which necessitates us having insurance to protect Trustees against claims. This would not be required if we were a CIO.

To effect the conversion, we need to create a whole new charity with a constitution, Trustees and a bank account. Once that is set up, we then merge the two charities together, then close our existing one. Our current rules require that we need to hold a Special General Meeting to close the charity down.

In terms of the implications for the general running of HD&OS, there would be no discernible difference to the people taking part in the activities of the Society. Graham hoped that we would get through the process fairly quickly and had set a target of November 2025 for completion. Graham would put an explanatory article in the Newsletter so that all members would have the opportunity to read about the proposal. He wanted to make sure that everyone was comfortable with the change and would welcome questions or comments, either in person, by email or by phone.

Anna Palmer noted that, at the Away-day meeting, there had been a suggestion to change the name of the Society, especially as the 'Operatic' part of the name was misleading nowadays and suggested that this would be a good time to do it. Graham explained that the Charity Commission is much more interested in higher level matters than details of how a society operate. All matters that occurred at the Away-day can be dealt with by Trustees at any time. Regarding the society name, Graham explained that there were two issues: firstly, the new charity has to have a different name from the existing one, and secondly, there are specific words that we can't use without getting special approval from Companies House – one of those words is 'Society'. In order to make the process as seamless as possible, Graham would suggest that we keep the new name as close to the old name as possible, with the option of changing it later. Another option is to adopt a working name which would be less sensitive than the formal name. For example, at present, our formal name is Hertford Dramatic and Operatic Society, but we have several working names (HD&OS, HDOS).

Malcolm Budd also felt that the term 'Operatic' was now outdated. Pat Lay noted that most people drop the 'and' and refer to us habitually as HDOS. Several names had been suggested by email around the Trustees. Mary-Jane Tomlin pointed out that one such name suggestion was 'Hertford Theatre Company'.

Richard Edgar asked whether the rules specified a minimum number of people required to attend a special meeting to approve this change. Graham took an action to investigate.

Penny Coyston proposed a vote of thanks to Graham and stressed that she wanted people to be aware just how many hours of work he has already put into this. Seconded by Sandra Rowley. Meeting endorsed it heartily with a round of applause.

10. Any Other Business

No prior notifications of items of Any Other Business had been sent to the Hon. Secretary.

Upcoming events:

Sandra reminded people of the following upcoming events and dates for the diary:

The next monthly play-reading would be on Monday 14th July at 10.30am in Jane Dennison's garden in Queens Road. Recognising that this would be Bastille Day, we would be reading the Feydeau

farce *A Flea In Her Ear*. If anyone was interested in attending, but was not on the regular email distribution list, they should contact Julie Markey for further details or to be added to the list.

Our Autumn musical would be *Saturday Night Fever*, once again at BEAM and would run from Wednesday 15th – Saturday 18th October. Tickets were now on sale via the BEAM website. Sandra encouraged everyone to bring their family and friends along to see this vibrant, dance-focused show. Rehearsals were in full swing, and the singing was sounding amazing.

Saturday 15th November was the date scheduled for the popular Backstage Darts Match, open to anyone who has helped backstage in any capacity.

The panto would be *The Little Mermaid*, directed by Clive Dancey, and would be performed in our Studio Theatre during December. The get-together would be held on Tuesday 1st July, Bentley House, 7.45 pm, with auditions on July 15th. Sandra encouraged everyone to come along and support this re-imagining of the story of the Little Mermaid, but she asked people to note that this was NOT the Disney version.

Sandra thanked everyone for their support and attendance and declared the meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

The next meeting of the Trustees would be held on Wednesday 2nd July.

REPORTS FOR 2025-2026

Report from the Trustees for 2025-2026

Over the past twelve months HD&OS continued to perform shows at The Studio Theatre in Bentley House and BEAM Theatre in Hertford. All HD&OS productions performed at both venues provided excellent entertainment for our audiences.

The main duties of the Trustees are:

- Ensuring that HD&OS is managed appropriately and solvent. The Trustees continue to minimise expenditure where possible yet remain consistent with the Society objectives for the quality of our shows.
- Ensuring that the charity complies with its own rules. There have been no issues for the Trustees to deal with.
- Over the past twelve months we had the pleasure of performing *The Little Mermaid* in December 2025 and *RENT* in April 2026 both of which were performed at The Studio Theatre, Bentley House.
- Also during the past twelve months HD&OS performed *Saturday Night Fever* in October 2025, at BEAM Theatre in Hertford.
- Unfortunately this year Hertford Theatre Week had to be cancelled but HD&OS did enter *Double Acts II*, *A Flock of Tigers* and *English for Pony Lovers*, in the Welwyn Drama Festival in May 2025 and won six awards!

The Trustees have also addressed some specific areas of concern for the benefit of the society:

- Communication between HD&OS and the Signature management team has been ongoing on a regular basis over the past twelve months.

There are three other items that will be interest to members

- A new door has been installed in the wall between Rehearsal Room 2 and the stairs to the workshop. The new door enables access and egress to Rehearsal Room 2 without disturbing activities in Rehearsal Room 1. Our thanks and appreciation go to Steve Onyon and team for their hard work in undertaking and completing the task.
- New internal replacement lighting has been installed in Bentley House. Our thanks and appreciation go to Andrew Coyston and team for their hard work in undertaking and completing the task.
- HD&OS has been restructured to enable HD&OS to benefit from Theatre Tax Relief via a subsidiary company HD&OS Productions Limited. Our thanks and appreciation go to Graham Lay for undertaking and completing this task. Graham will provide more detail regarding this restructure during the AGM.

It is my sad duty to report the deaths of Paul Saban in June 2025, Sally Tomlin in October 2025, Denise Hall in February 2026 and Anna Hollow in March 2026 all of whom have performed in productions for HD&OS over the years. Our condolences are extended to the families of Paul, Sally, Denise and Anna.

I would like to thank all Trustees for their support and contribution during the year in fulfilling this essential role to maintain the Society's smooth operation.

Clive Bell
Chairman of Trustees

Membership Report 2025-26

As of 18th May 2026, HD&OS has 141 members (20 Friends, 2 Juniors, 82 Members, 33 Seniors, 4 in Full Time Education).

The numbers above exclude the 8 Life Members and the President.

The table below shows a comparison to the previous few years:

	2023	2024	2025	2026	Change
Adult Members		70	76	82	+6
Seniors		32	27	33	+6
Juniors		19	28	2	-26
Full Time Education		3	0	4	+4
Friends		33	32	20	-12
Total	108	157	163	141	-22

Full Adult membership and Senior membership has increased year on year, but Junior membership has dropped dramatically, which reflects our programme of shows this year. A surprising change has been that our Friend membership has reduced significantly (although there were three conversions from Friend to Member status).

Further to discussions concerning the manual database of members which is currently held on a simple spreadsheet, we intend to move to a specifically designed web-based membership system called MemberMojo, to manage membership subscriptions, membership details, and email addresses for newsletter distribution.

We are currently trialling the system, but plan to roll it out this Summer in time for the start of the new membership year in September 2026. Once set up, MemberMojo will automatically send members (and interested parties), a link to the database, which when accessed will enable people to update their details directly themselves.

This will ensure members are in control of their own information, such as address, email, phone etc. as well as recording their interests such as acting, costume, stage management, set building, props, and make-up. The system will also automatically send reminders out for payment of membership fees and potentially show fees.

When we implement the change, we will send out full details about what to do, and how to update the system, and of course there will also be the option to come directly to me as before. All information will continue to be held in confidence by your Membership Secretary, and relevant information will only be shared to named people, when there is a specific need to contact you (as now). Further details about how your personal information will be used, will be communicated as we roll-out MemberMojo, so you know how we will use your information.

MemberMojo is a big step forward in managing the membership administration of the Society, and will enable your Trustees to have better information with which to make decisions on behalf of the Society.

Your Trustees have also been discussing whether the current membership fee structure should be changed.

I attach a paper (Appendix 1) that looks at some of the issues we have been discussing, and the various options we have been mulling over. We'd like to hear your views at the AGM, so I'd be grateful if you could give it some consideration. We will then develop these ideas further over the coming year.

In the meantime, the Trustees will be putting a resolution to the AGM that, once MemberMojo is active, we move from a static membership year running from September to August each year, to a rolling 52-week membership, where each person's membership runs for 52 weeks regardless of when in the year they join. Fortunately, MemberMojo manages the increased administration that this entails! The reason

we'd like to make the change, is that it is fairer to those who join the Society late in the year. Please could we have your support for this proposal?

Anne Godwin

Membership Secretary – HD&OS

Report on Productions and Events 2025-26

Following a decision taken last year, the committee structure was revised, and three different teams were set up, each with a team leader drawn from Trustees to aid the reporting structure and facilitate the setting-up of the teams.

The Production Committee was renamed the Programme Planning team, and continues to have responsibility for putting together a rolling programme of shows and events for the next two years, with a view to being able to advertise shows well in advance in order to attract those wishing to audition and to set up ticket sales in what has become an increasingly competitive market, both for actors/backstage personnel as well as for audiences. This team, led by Julie Markey, is largely composed of the members of the previous Production committee, with a few changes. The team have brought in visiting productions as well as ensuring we have a wide variety of shows under our own name. Due to certain scheduling difficulties, there has been an unusual concentration of shows over the Spring and Summer, which has put strain on our backstage personnel. A Technical Team was set up under the leadership of Richard Edgar, responsible for all matters to do with the creative team for a show. Richard has held meetings attended by those involved in supporting current shows, as well as encouraging anyone with an interest in backstage work to come along and find out what we do and what we need. It has become increasingly obvious that we need to increase the number of people we have available to draw on to staff all the productions, particularly when it comes to sound. A Marketing team, led by Pat Lay, has taken on responsibility for the promotion of shows, events and the Society itself. This report will address all three areas within the framework of the year's events.

Shows

The first show of the season was *Saturday Night Fever*, performed on Stage 1 at BEAM in October, and directed by Hailey Budd. The lack of a set for hire in the UK was a major stumbling block with this production, and the many elements, including a light-up disco floor, part of a suspension bridge, and several American settings such as a diner and a coffee bar, had to be sourced separately or built in-house. With a monumental effort, the set came together, albeit too close to show date for comfort, and the result from the backstage teams was spectacular. The talented cast put on a terrific show, but unfortunately it did not translate into ticket sales and the show made a substantial loss.

Our next show was the in-house panto, *The Little Mermaid*, in December 2025, directed by Clive Dancey. After poor ticket sales for our panto the previous year in BEAM, it was decided to try a two-week run in the Studio Theatre, with performances from the Thursday through to the Sunday of the two weeks, with evening performances on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and matinees on Saturday and Sunday. The matinees were very popular for this traditional family pantomime, and ticket sales were generally very good. However, it did prove a challenge to staff the two weeks, particularly as it was just before Christmas, and finding someone to do the sound proved particularly difficult.

The next show was *RENT, The Musical* in April, directed by Lorraine Bottomley, again in the Studio Theatre, which was transformed into a run-down area of New York City's East Village, with a magnificently evocative set. This groundbreaking show was done full justice with terrific performances by a talented cast, supported by wonderful music and superb backstage support. Once again, we tried an experiment with tickets sales, starting the performances on the Monday to give a total of 6 shows, and it was gratifying to see it playing to full houses throughout the week – indeed there was a waiting list for several performances.

At present we have three shows in rehearsal: *The Vicar of Dibley – A Holy, Wholly Happy Ending* which will be performed on Stage 1 at BEAM in June; *The Government Inspector* which will be performed in-house in July; and *We Will Rock You* which will be on Stage 1 at BEAM in October. *The Vicar of Dibley* is the last in the Dibley series, and it has been wonderful to welcome several new faces to the cast. *The Government Inspector* was originally planned to be performed on Stage 2 in BEAM, but the lack of dressing room space and a clash with a major touring production made this impractical from our point of view so it was moved to the Studio Theatre at a later date. This has resulted in us having two plays being put on rather too close together, causing problems for the technical team in staffing both productions, both in terms of cast and crew. However, we are nearly there and now just need to sell lots of tickets, especially for *Dibley* at BEAM. This will be our first drama production at BEAM so will be a test piece for how well the tickets sell. It has also been difficult to fit in rehearsals at Bentley House for the three shows, and we have had to source external rehearsal space, which obviously impacts on the budget.

Visiting productions and collaborations

In August 2025, Sarah and Stage Productions hired our premises to put on a three-day *Grease*-themed summer camp in the Studio Theatre. This was open to any children from 7-15 and was very popular. As we, as a Society, had no-one at the time who was able to take on organising more of the workshops we had put on during the previous year, this was a very good collaboration which enabled us to join in offering activity for younger people. In October, Sarah and Stage Productions returned to do a Halloween-themed camp during the half-term holiday, which again proved popular, though it was unfortunately disrupted by the wasps which have been causing us problems over the autumn and winter. On 20th and 21st June this year, Sarah and Stage will be bringing their own production of *Cats* to the Studio theatre as a visiting production, and in August we are doing a joint “summer intensive” of *Into the Woods* with Sarah and Stage, which will be over two weeks – the first week for rehearsal and the second week for performances. A talented cast of young people has been assembled, so do look out for this and support it.

In September 2026 we have arranged for Harry Harding to bring a professional production of his own play *Potato/Tomato* to the Studio Theatre. This is a very funny play which has already played at the White Bear Theatre in London, and we are greatly looking forward to welcoming it to Hertford.

To round off the report on shows, it must be noted that, at the NODA East Gala Awards Luncheon in March, two of our shows from the previous season were nominated for awards – *Dick Whittington* in Best Panto category, and *We Will Rock You – Youth version* for Best Youth Production. We are delighted to say that *We Will Rock You* won the Best Youth Production – a well-deserved reward for all their hard work under the direction of Scott Welch.

Looking further ahead, we have *A Christmas Carol* in-house in December, directed by Sami Underwood and with a new script written by Sami and her husband, Jon, so look out for that one! In April next year, Kris Siekerman will be directing *Dear Evan Hansen* in the Studio Theatre, and we are planning a Poirot evening of two one-act plays directed by Harry Harding.

Young Idea

In February 2026, Trustees were approached by True and Saphie Meischke with a detailed plan and proposal to start up the Young Idea again. Once all the necessary DBS certification had been acquired and preparation work done, the introductory session took place on 22nd April 2026, with the first proper session on 6th May. This was well attended and everyone who came enjoyed it and went off to spread the word. Sessions take place from 4.30-6.30pm on Wednesdays, so please spread the word around if you know anyone with young people from age 9-18 who are interested in the dramatic arts.

Hertford Theatre Week

It has not been possible to present Hertford Theatre Week again this year, due to the lack of a venue as Haileybury is still undertaking building work on the theatre complex. As we are not yet sure when their renovations will be completed, there are currently no plans for the drama festival in 2027.

Play Readings

Our monthly play-reading group has continued throughout the year, usually on a Monday or Tuesday morning towards the beginning of the month, and usually at Bentley House. Our Christmas social was kindly hosted once again by Julie and Jim Markey, as was our January session, due to the lighting works being carried out at Bentley House. Our summer session was kindly hosted by Jane Denison, when we were able, once again, to sit out in her beautiful garden. We have read a wide variety of plays throughout the year, from farce, through melodrama and black comedy to Shakespeare, and we continue to welcome new people to join the group. Unfortunately, the Performing Arts Library in Welwyn Garden City, on which the play-reading group depends for its supply of play sets, is threatened with closure, and we have been encouraging everyone to respond to the public consultation. HD&OS members, people from other amateur dramatic societies and personal friends have all been encouraged to respond to try to save this valuable resource.

Social Events

Unfortunately, our annual Backstage Darts Match, scheduled to take place in November 2025, had to be cancelled due to lack of support. There were several events taking place that evening, so hopefully that will go ahead as normal this November.

Our Christmas party was an informal affair with mulled wine and mince pies and was held on 5th December in the foyer at Bentley House. Once again, there were several other events on that evening which meant that attendance was lower than hoped, but in spite of that it was a lovely evening and a chance to catch up with friends.

A line-dancing evening under the tutelage of Heidi Koutselinis who runs our Saturday dance class also attracted a small but enthusiastic group of people who had great fun learning the routine.

Social Media and Marketing

There have been difficulties in getting a permanent Marketing team together, though we do have a small core of people on the team and several people have offered help on an as-required basis. The objective is to identify at least one person to create content for each show, and we are grateful to Sarah Putz for taking the content provided and putting out some very eye-catching posts on social media. Engagement on social media remains erratic, with some posts performing better than others, notably video reels and cast announcements. We have made great efforts this year to advertise get-togethers and auditions well in advance, as competition for cast and crew among local societies remains challenging. It helps enormously if people with Facebook can “Like” and “Share” posts as this boosts the algorithm and helps to reach more people. Social media remains one of the chief means of advertising shows and we do post on other amateur dramatic platforms. During the year, it has been pleasing to welcome many new audience members to our shows at Bentley House, and it is interesting to ask them how they heard of us. Many are relatives or friends of cast members, though several have picked up flyers around the town. It is surprising, however, how many people visiting us for the first time actually live in Hertford – often very close by – but had no idea that we were here. Again, I would encourage you to spread news of our activities by word of mouth around friends and neighbours as much as possible – it really does help! We also have a cost-effective ‘quid pro quo’ arrangement with other societies for distributing flyers at productions and advertising in each other’s programmes.

The rather limited amount of coverage we get on the rolling boards at BEAM remains an issue, though we do pay a charity rate which gives us less coverage than those on full commercial rate. Distributing flyers around the town remains an important part of raising awareness and we remain very grateful to Irons Dry Cleaners for their continuing support in allowing us to display a large poster in their window. We are hoping to extend our marketing activities over the coming year and to build on links with the community. BEAM has a great many events on now, and the competition to sell tickets is fierce. With two shows so far which have made a significant loss there, it is a learning curve regarding which shows will sell, and the Programme Planning Team are very aware of the need to choose carefully.

Grateful thanks to everyone who has helped in any way to promote our Society and our shows over the past year, whether by distributing flyers, by word of mouth, by creating content for social media or by bringing family and friends to shows and events. Your support does not go unnoticed and is greatly

appreciated. If anyone has skills, expertise or just enthusiasm in the field of social media or marketing in general, we would be delighted to hear from you!

Conclusion

We are still in urgent need of more technical support. Richard Edgar has had to step down temporarily as Technical Team lead for personal reasons, and that role is currently being covered by the rest of the team, so there is an urgent need for people to come forward, especially in the sound department where we struggle most to cover shows, and with set-building (no experience necessary – training will be given). Help on the Marketing team would also be most welcome. We remain endlessly grateful to everyone who helps in any capacity to put on our shows – it wouldn't happen without you!

Pat Lay and Julie Markey

Bentley House Bar Report 2025-26

The bar has been open for in-house productions, social evenings, after-show parties and, when requested, rehearsals. The bar continues to make a small but steady profit. Due to inflation, we have had to implement a small price increase on certain items, but the bar still offers very competitive prices.

Thank you to all the members and friends who have helped behind the bar during the year, their help is much appreciated. If anyone is interested in helping on the bar for our forthcoming productions, please let me know.

Sally Newland - Acting Bar Manager

Treasurer's report – financial year 2024-2025

Our accounts for August 2024 to July 2025 (the financial year end) have been circulated to the membership for presentation at the AGM. The Society had an operating loss of £5.2k for the year and total funds were reduced slightly from £291k to £288k. The major factor behind these numbers is the return to large scale shows as Hertford Theatre completed its refurbishment and reopened as BEAM.

All expenditure was supported by an Expense form or similar documentation which the Society's members have completed to confirm that they are valid and to ensure expenses are allocated correctly. Thanks are due to David Cousins for reviewing the accounts and declaring them satisfactory.

We have been able to present a number of productions during the year and the accounts show outturn from the shows. Trustees had decided that our first show at BEAM should create something of a splash and so *Shrek* was chosen. At the outset this was known to be an expensive show to present with complex hired costumes and set, but ticket sales exceeded all expectations to deliver a small profit. Our next foray to BEAM however, was not a success financially. Encouraged by the success of *Shrek* we budgeted on higher audience numbers for *Dick Whittington* than were achieved and we discovered that the supply chain for sets had grown much more expensive than previously experienced, with the result that the production ended up losing £10.5k. In-house shows all returned a profit, offsetting some of this loss, and the young person's show, *We Will Rock You*, was notable for achieving £3.5k profit. *We Will Rock You* also raised £349 for the Jessica Brady CEDAR Trust and this appears as Donations lines in that show's accounts.

Expenditure by the Society was stable, apart from the investments that we have made in improving Bentley House. These include the creation of a new entrance into the Committee Room and subsequent redecoration. The cost of repairs increased by £3k to cover these items.

Show fees have become an important part of the Society's income and their value exceeded that of membership payments. Unfortunately, gift aid cannot be claimed on show fees but in the course of the

year gift aid claims were made for several year's subscriptions totalling £2.2k, bringing us up to date with available claims.

Investments continue to deliver with an increase in capital value by £3k and an income of 11.6k, helping maintain the overall balance sheet value of the Society which has changed by a relatively small amount, from £291k to £288k. Outstanding asset depreciation continues to fall but the Society has had to fund the deposits for shows at BEAM. The balance sheet value is therefore largely made up of liquid assets.

Looking ahead to the next financial year, the programme of investment in Bentley House will continue with the installation of an exit from RR2 to the back stairs and replacement of light fittings with LED in RR1 and RR2.

Shows in BEAM will challenge our finances, and the ability to claim Theatre Tax Rebate has taken longer than anticipated because it became impractical to transfer the lease of Bentley House to a new organisation (a CIO) as explained to last year's AGM, so instead a new subsidiary for HD&OS has been set up (HD&OS Productions) that will manage the finances of our shows and be eligible for TTR claims.

Graham Lay

Treasurer – HD&OS



Hertford Dramatic		Hertford Dramatic and Operatic Society		271065	
Annual accounts for the period					
Period start date		01/08/2024	To	Period end date	31/07/2025

Section A Statement of financial activities

Donations and Legacies	Unrestricted funds £ F01	Restricted income funds £ F02	Endowment funds £ F03	Total funds £ F04	Prior year funds £ F04	
Incoming Resources						
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	8,453	-	-	8,453	4,912	
Charitable activities	81,180	-	-	81,180	39,994	See Note 1, Show Accounts
Other trading activities	5,351	-	-	5,351	4,864	See Note 2, Income
Investment income	11,608	-	-	11,608	11,362	See Note 5, Investments
Other	-	-	-	-	-	
Total	106,591	-	-	106,591	61,132	
Resources expended (Note 3)						
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	-	-	-	-	-	
Charitable activities	84,099	-	-	84,099	26,542	See Note 1, Show Accounts
Separate material item of expense	19,512	-	-	19,512	15,241	See Note 3, Bentley House costs
Other	8,184	-	-	8,184	8,403	See note 3, Other Costs
Total	111,795	-	-	111,795	50,186	
Net income/(expenditure) before investment gains/(losses)	- 5,204	-	-	- 5,204	10,947	
Net gains/(losses) on investments	3,497	-	-	3,497	14,361	See Note 5, Investments
Net income/(expenditure)	- 1,707	-	-	- 1,707	25,307	
Extraordinary items	-	-	-	-	-	
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-	
Other recognised gains/(losses):						
Gains and losses on revaluation of fixed assets for the charity's own use	1,196	-	-	1,196	3,883	See Note 4, Fixed Assets
Other gains/(losses)	-	-	-	-	55	
Net movement in funds	- 2,903	-	-	- 2,903	21,479	
Prior Year Adjustment						
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward	291,183	-	-	291,183	269,704	
Total funds carried forward	288,280	-	-	288,280	291,183	

Section B Balance sheet

	Unrestricted funds £ F01	Restricted income funds £ F02	Endowment funds £ F03	Total this year £ F04	Total last year £ F05	Notes
Fixed assets						
Tangible assets	2,199		-	2,199	3,395	
Investments	241,637		-	241,637	238,140	
Total fixed assets	243,837	-	-	243,837	241,536	
Current assets						
Bar stock	-	767		767	848	
Presidents medals	-	420		420	420	
Prepayments		9,226	-	9,226	9,981	
Cash at bank and in hand		35,551	-	35,551	42,039	
Total current assets		45,964	-	45,964	53,288	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		1,520	-	1,520	3,640	
Net current assets/(liabilities)		44,444	-	44,444	49,648	
Total assets less current liabilities		288,280	-	288,280	291,183	
Creditors: amounts falling due after one year (Note 20)		-	-	-	-	
Provisions for liabilities		-	-	-	-	
Total net assets or liabilities		288,280	-	288,280	291,183	
Funds of the Charity						
Endowment funds (Note 27)	-			-	-	
Restricted income funds (Note 27)		-		-	-	
Unrestricted funds	288,280		-	288,280	291,183	
Revaluation reserve	-			-	-	
Total funds	288,280	-	-	288,280	291,183	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name				
		GRD Lay				

Section C Notes to the accounts

Note 1 Analysis of Shows

	DickWhittington	DoubleActs 2025	Home, I'm Darling	Shrek	WeWillRockYou	Young Idea Workshop	Total
Income							
4030 - Donation Received				500	345		845
4205 - Ticket Sales	16,873	3,132	4,094	45,063	4,259	1,588	75,008
4210 - Programme Sales				512			512
4300 - Show Fees	1,260			3,600	800		5,660
Total Income	18,133	3,132	4,094	49,675	5,404	1,588	82,026
Cost of Sales							
6005 - Hire of Venue	11,214			9,857	165		21,236
6010 - Staging	5,747	169	167	7,375			13,458
6015 - Staging Transport	2,784						2,784
6020 - Lighting	1,200				346		1,546
6023 - Effects	451			816	360		1,627
6025 - Sound	1,097			2,385	30		3,512
6030 - Properties			30	353			383
6035 - Wardrobe	2,497	20	25	7,036	458		10,036
6040 - Musical Director	1,670			1,000	300		2,970
6043 - Music Arrangement				200			200
6045 - Orchestra	1,215			4,169			5,384
6049 - Choreographer	200		100	500	200		1,000
6050 - Director				500	200	1,250	1,950
6053 - Licenses	84			120			204
6055 - Royalties		480	510	8,652	648		10,290
6060 - Posters, Flyers; Printing	284			225	65		574
6063 - Programme Design & Print		39		840	39		919
6070 - Advertising	101			152			253
6080 - Scripts & Scores			75	2,410	550		3,035
6085 - Photographs	84	69	77	82	68		380
6095 - Sundry Show Expenses				1,630			1,630
6105 - Show - Secretarial				180		160	340
6120 - Show Hospitality	11			28			39
Total Cost of Sales	28,639	777	985	48,509	3,430	1,410	83,750
5035 - Donations Paid					349.31		349
Total including Expenses	28,639	777	985	48,509	3,779	1,410	84,099
Net Operating Income	- 10,506	2,354	3,110	1,166	1,625	178	- 2,251

Note 2 Analysis of income

Note 2

Analysis of income

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds £	Prior year £
	Analysis				
Donations and Legacies	Donations and gifts	1,180	-	1,180	272
	Gift Aid	2,207	-	2,207	
	Legacies	-	-	-	
	General grants provided by government/other charities	-	-	-	
	Membership subscriptions and sponsorships which are in substance donations	5,065		5,065	4,640
	Donated goods, facilities and services				
	Other	-			
	income	Total	8,453	-	8,453
Charitable activities:	Canteen	-		-	16
	Entry Fees	-		-	30
	Show Fees	5,660		5,660	915
	Ticket sales	75,008		75,008	37,187
	Programme Sales	512	-	512	431
	Other	- 0	-	- 0	1,416
		Total	81,180	-	81,180
Other trading activities:		-	-	-	-
	Asset Hire	3,378	-	3,378	45
	Bar Income	1,743	-	1,721	3,879
	Other	230	-	230	940
	Total	5,351	-	5,329	4,864
Income from investments:	Interest income	-	-	-	-
	Dividend income	11,608	-	11,608	11,362
	Rental and leasing income	-	-	-	-
	Other	-	-	-	-
	Total	11,608	-	11,608	11,362
TOTAL INCOME		106,591	-	106,569	61,132

Notes

Income shown on Show accounts includes £845 donations.

Note 3

Analysis of expenditure

Analysis		Total funds £	Prior year £
Bentley House	Building Repairs & Maintenance	5,127	2,117
	Cleaning and management	2,770	2,171
	Electricity	3,135	3,862
	Gas	6,673	6,535
	Telephone	433	380
	Rates (Non - Domestic)	213	177
	Water	1,161	
	Total	19,512	15,241
Other			
	Archive Expenses	-	102
	B.H. Refreshments	81	187
	Donations	-	50
	General Advertising	897	273
	Bar Expenses	-	108
	Insurances	2,352	2,403
	Makeup	214	
	Miscellaneous Expenses	269	236
	Newsletter		
	Postage	55	
	Stationery	5	
	Printing		
	Total Newsletter	60	83
	PayPal	72	1
	Photocopying	948	1,381
	President's Expenses	210	51
	Secretarial Expenses	22	
	Social Events Expenses	133	163
	Software (QuickBooks)	612	518
	Sound/Lighting Repairs	1,031	654
	Stationery	18	42
	Subscriptions & Licences	604	770
	Trustee Expenses	57	52
	Training		
	Wardrobe Repairs		
	Website	451	490
	Workshop Renewals		322
	Workshop Repairs	151	516
	Total	8,184	8,403
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		27,696	23,644

Note 4

Tangible fixed assets

Acquisition and Depreciation

Donations and Legacies	Bar Equipment	Bentley House Boiler	Computer Hardware & software	Foyer	Furniture & Fittings	Lighting Bridge	Lighting Equipment	Drapes	Properties & Wardrobe	Tools & Plant	Total
Original Cost	87	5,357	3,478	42,513	40,893	10,561	60,355	1,949	6,595	31,660	203,447
Investments											
Additions											
Cum. Dep. As @ 31/7/2024	87	5,357	3,478	42,016	40,893	9,103	60,355	509	6,681	31,660	203,423
Depreciation 2023/24	-	-		497		533		166			1,196
Cum. Dep. As @ 31/7/2025	87	5,357	3,478	42,513	40,893	9,636	60,355	675	6,681	31,660	201,334
Net Book value 31/7/24	-	-	-	-	-	1,458	-	509	-	-	3,395
Net Book value 31/7/25	-	-	-	-	-	925	-	1,274	-	-	2,199

Note 5

Investment assets

	Cash & cash equivalents	Listed investments	Investment properties
Carrying (fair) value at start of year	-	238,140	-
Add: additions to investments during period*	-		-
Less: disposals at carrying value	-	-	-
Less: impairments	-	-	-
Add: Reversal of impairments	-	-	-
Investment income	-	-	-
Gain/Loss on revaluation	-	3,497	-
Carrying (fair) value at end of year	-	241,637	

Holdings:

Charifund: 7361 units.

Blackrock Charities UK Bond Fund (income) 62735 units.

Schroder Charity Multi-Asset Fund, 18218.26 units.

valuation (from FT)

Column1	Column2	units	Price	Value
Charifund		7362	16.09	118433
Blackrock		62735	1.42	89084
Schroder		55123	0.62	34121
Total				241637



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Hertford Dramatic and Operatic Society

On accounts for the year
ended

31st July 2025

Charity no
(if any)

271065

Set out on pages

1-7

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31/07/2025**.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, 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 Trust'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 (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did 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.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

D. Cousins

Date:

25/02/2020

Name:

DAVID COUSINS

Appendix 1: Discussion on Membership Fee Structure

Over the last few years, we have seen fewer people aligned to a specific Society year on year, and more people moving from Society to Society throughout the year depending on what shows are of interest to them. This means that there are fewer core members of HD&OS, and fewer people being interested in working backstage or in the running of the Society, and a more transient population overall. Various options for changing our membership fee structure are detailed below.

Current policy

- Membership fees are due each year in September and run until August 31st the following year.
- All cast members must be members to perform, and fees are due from the first rehearsal date.
- Fees are not pro-rated regardless of when in the year members join, although anyone who is cast for the October musical or Autumn/Panto and has paid pre the September anniversary date, has not been asked to pay again to perform.
- Current fees (which have not been increased for 5+ years) are:
 - £45 for full adult membership (18-65 years)
 - £25 for full junior/full-time education /senior membership (under 18s and over 65s)
 - £10 for Friends
- Backstage members have a choice whether to join the Society or not, and as a member or friend.
- Trustees, Officers, and Sub-Committee members are required to be members.
- Life members do not have to pay a membership fee.
- Directors do not have to be a member, but if they are, they cannot charge a fee although expenses can be paid.

Issues

1. People who perform tend not to join the Society year on year: they join when they must, i.e. when cast. Most people who join in September/October/November are long-term or backstage or current cast, and few perform.
 - Should we charge the same membership fee to members who do not perform?
 - If performers tend to move from Society to Society, do they need to be members?
 - What does membership mean/give someone?
 - Preferential casting? **X**
 - Preferential directing opportunities? **X**
 - Newsletter? (distributed to Members and Friends, but is available for others to view)
 - Feeling of belonging / funding something important **Y**
 - The opportunity to be a Trustee, Officer, or Sub-Committee member **Y**
 - A say in the running of the Society **Y**
2. There is no guidance to determine the difference between a Member and a Friend other than no vote or say in the running of the Society. It appears to be voluntary, and the person decides what they want to contribute.
 - What value does the category of Friend offer? Is there merit in retaining it?
 - Should we merge Backstage and Friends into one category?
3. Since we rely on many volunteers, helpers, and people we have asked to participate, should we offer them something, such as free membership (to encourage on-going support and participation) or a free ticket to the show they are supporting?
4. Some feedback from members who join through being cast in a show, that the membership should either be pro-rata the membership year, or cover them for a rolling 52 weeks, as it doesn't seem fair to charge them again within 12 months. This is exacerbated by the new tradition of show fees.

Options for consideration

1. Reduce the membership fees to a nominal sum, for example, £20 (adults), £15 (seniors, child, full time education), £5 (friends) and potentially build the loss of income into show fees.

Benefits	Concerns
▪ Reduces the financial barrier to joining. ▪ Easier to 'sell' to people we approach to join a show, particularly when they're members of many societies. ▪ Makes the decision to become a full member easier rather than remaining as a Friend	▪ Show Fees are already high for some shows, and some cast may be unable to afford it. ▪ Is it fair to place more financial burden on to cast?

2. Do not require cast to join the Society and just charge a Show Fee for every show, but reduce the fee for those cast who are members (potentially in conjunction with all other options).

Benefits	Concerns
▪ Simpler for cast to understand and accept. ▪ Keeps membership 'pure' to those with an interest in contributing to/running the Society. ▪ An incentive to join the Society rather than an obligation – change in mindset. ▪ Simpler to administer - no need to chase membership fees. ▪ Overall income/cost to cast would be the same.	▪ May contravene Charity Commission Gift Aid rules

3. Merge Friend and Backstage membership into one tier (potentially in conjunction with option 3 or 4).

Benefits	Concerns
▪ Removes the differentiation between two categories where individual contribution may be similar. ▪ Recognises a difference between performers, and those who work hard behind the scenes. ▪ Addresses the lack of a clear rationale for Friend membership. ▪ Simplifies the membership tiers.	▪ Would we generate sufficient income?

4. In conjunction with Options 1 and 2 above, have optional differentiated Show Fees to recognise the difference between principals, those with very small parts, and other cast members. To be determined by Director, Producer, and Treasurer.

Benefits	Concerns
▪ Is fairer for those who are on stage for a limited period compared to those who are in the limelight. ▪ Ensures some contribution is paid by all cast members rather than waiving a show fee altogether.	▪ Does it encourage more debate about fairness rather than less? ▪ Affordability for principals who, by definition, will have to pay more.