



HAVANT'S OWN THEATRE COMPANY - SINCE 1969

BENCH THEATRE

Statutory Accounts and Annual Report for the period 1 August 2023 - 31 July 2024

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website - www.benchtheatre.org.uk

Email: treasurer@benchtheatre.org.uk

Registered Charity No: 291935



Trustees' Annual Report 1 August 2023 - 31 July 2024

Charity Name Bench Theatre

Registered Number 291935

Charity's principal address The Spring, 56 East Street
Havant
Hampshire PO9 1BS

Bankers: Santander, Bridle Road, Bootle, Merseyside, L30 4ZY

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
Jacque Penrose	Chair	
David Penrose	Secretary	
Jessi Wilson	Treasurer	To 7th March 2024
Andrew Caple	Treasurer	From 7th March 2024

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of the charity's status

Type of Governing Document	Constitution - last revised and agreed in September 2001. Minor, practical modifications agreed at the AGM on 3 September 2015.
How the charity is constituted	A charitable society as defined in the constitution
Trustee selection methods	Elected to office by the membership.

Background Information - the object

The Bench Theatre was established in February 1969 (then titled the Theatre Union) and was soon after registered as a Charitable Society. The object of the Bench Theatre is to advance the education of the public by furthering the dramatic arts. The Bench Theatre has no paid members or paid executive.

Summary of the main activities in relation to that object

The Bench Theatre has a regular programme of five shows each year at The Spring Arts and Heritage Centre. Additionally it may also take shows to the annual Totton Festival of Drama, Chichester Fringe or other local festivals. From time to time, the Bench may engage in other initiatives such as playwriting competitions and fund-raising activities such as raffles, costume sales etc. All activities conducted are in line with the Bench's constitution and charitable object.

How our activities deliver public benefit

The Bench's main activity is to advance the education of the public and attract members and audiences who might not otherwise have the opportunity to experience or participate in the dramatic arts.

Achievements and Performances

In Financial Year 2023/2024 the Bench performed the following main productions:

September 2023: "Duets" by Peter Quilter. 5 performances.

November 2023: "Love Bites" by Mark Wakeman. A programme of one act plays. 8 performances.

February 2024: "The Father" by Florian Zeller. 5 performances.

April 2024: "Abigail's Party" by Mike Leigh. 8 performances.

July 2024: "Pygmalion" by George Bernard Shaw. 8 performance.

In addition The Bench Theatre supported the Chichester Fringe in June 2024 with a performance of 'Face the Music' by Jacquie Penrose. An intended performance of 'Goodbye' by Mark Wakeman at the Totton Drama Festival in March 2024 had to be cancelled due to illness.

The Bench continued to receive loyal support from its members and its 'Friends of the Bench'.

Financial Review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The Bench Theatre's policy is to maintain sufficient reserves to fund 12 month's of theatre rental whilst retaining sufficient working capital for day to day operation. This is in the event that all productions are cancelled and no ticket sales revenue received (as recently happened during the COVID pandemic lockdown). The contract, with The Spring Arts and Heritage Centre, covers the hire of rehearsal space and theatre hire for the charity's 5 main yearly productions and costs £19,828/year as of 31st July 2024.

The Bench Theatre's reserve, in the charity's two savings accounts, totalled £17,974 as of 31st July 2024. This is much smaller than before the pandemic due to losses from production shutdowns and a subsequent slow return of audiences. However, in the last year, the balance sheet has stabilised. It is the aim of the Trustees to maintain the reserve at a sufficient level from growing audiences and the control of ticket prices and production expenses.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

NIL

Principal Funding Sources

The principal funding sources for the Bench are membership subscriptions, ticket sales, programme sales, donations and, from time to time, fund raising activities.

Plans for future periods

The Bench plans to continue to pursue its charitable object, retain and expand its membership, Friends and audiences, and refresh its profile in the Havant area and beyond, all within the context of its contract with The Spring (see above).

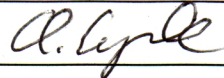
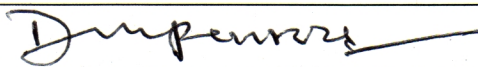
Independent Examiner

For the first time this year, the charity's income is more than £25,000, so an independent examination has been sought. Note that the Bench Theatre's trustees have obtained independent examination of the accounts in previous years, though not mandatory, for the purposes of good governance. The report is

AC NM

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Andrew Caple, Treasurer	
David Penrose, Secretary	
Date	29/08/24

Independent Examiners Report to the Bench Theatre

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and the examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

Basis of this report

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

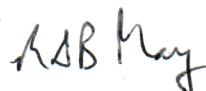
(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Mr Roger May
Independent Examiner
1 Monks Hill, Westbourne, West Sussex PO10 8SX



Date:

4/9/24



Bench Theatre

Statement of Financial Activities

For the Year Ended 31 July 2024

Income & Expenditure Account For The Year Ended		2024	2024	2023	2023
		Notes			
NON PRODUCTION INCOME					
Interest	3	£704.11		£234.06	
Subscriptions	4	£5,455.27		£4,256.56	
Merchandise Sales	5	£400.15		£115.00	
Donations	6	£890.72		£558.14	
Scripts	7	£0.00		£0.00	
Sub-total			£7,450.25		£5,163.76
PRODUCTION INCOME					
Ticket Receipts (less fees)	8	£21,463.20		£14,453.98	
Programme Sales	9	£1,290.79		£1,349.53	
Sub-total			£22,753.99		£15,803.51
TOTAL INCOME			£30,204.24		£20,967.27
NON PRODUCTION EXPENDITURE					
Various Admin	10	£0.00		£89.42	
Governance Costs	11	£531.28		£604.27	
Equipment & Staging (Company SM)	12	£127.40		£137.10	
Touring	13	£26.00		£0.00	
Rent	14	£19,828.32		£19,828.32	
Membership Admin	15	£19.60		£70.00	
Miscellaneous	16	£180.00		£0.00	
Sub-total			£20,712.60		£20,729.11
PRODUCTION EXPENDITURE					
Performance Rights	17	£2,761.15		£1,230.00	
Programmes	18	£21.46		£56.65	
Sets	19	£213.02		£91.96	
Props	19	£7.99		£28.17	
Costumes	19	£0.00		£152.99	
Banners	20	£200.00		£175.00	
Flyers and Posters	20	£461.61		£468.39	
Spring Brochure	20	£500.00		£250.00	
Photos	20	£26.19		£0.00	
Sub-total			£4,191.42		£2,453.16
TOTAL EXPENDITURE			£24,904.02		£23,182.27
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE			£5,300.22		-£2,215.00



**Bench Theatre
Balance Sheet as at
31 July 2024**

	Notes	2024 Restricted Funds £	2024 Unrestricted Funds £	2024 £	2023 Restricted Funds £	2023 Unrestricted Funds £	2023 £
Fixed Assets							
The charity has no fixed assets	21	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Current Assets							
Current Account	22	£0.00	£10,803.05		£0.00	£6,206.94	
Savings Account	22	£0.00	£4,634.03		£0.00	£4,589.50	
COIF Charities Deposit Fund	22	£0.00	£13,340.06		£0.00	£12,680.48	
Cash In Hand	22	£0.00	£5.00		£0.00	£5.00	
Total Current Assets		£0.00	£28,782.14	£28,782.14	£0.00	£23,481.92	£23,481.92
Liabilities							
Creditors	23	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00	£100.00	
Provision for Liabilities	24	£0.00	£9,914.16		£0.00	£9,914.16	
Total Liabilities		£0.00	£9,914.16	£9,914.16	£0.00	£10,014.16	£10,014.16
NET CURRENT ASSETS	25	£0.00	£18,867.98	£18,867.98	£0.00	£13,467.76	£13,467.76
TOTAL FUNDS				£18,867.98			£13,467.76

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1 Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies are summarised below. The accounting policies have been applied consistently throughout the year.

a) Basis of Accounting

The accounts have been prepared on the historic cost convention. The accounts are in accordance with applicable accounting standards, the Charities SORP (FRSSE) 2015 (Accounting and Reporting by Charities for Smaller Entities) and comply with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 issued under the Charities Act 1993

b) Fund Accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.

Restricted funds are funds that are donated/granted for a specific purpose and can only be used for that purpose, eg a specific production cost.

c) Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

d) Resources expended

Expenditure on projects is recorded in the year that expenditure occurs.

2 Taxation

As a charity the Bench Theatre is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or s256 of the Taxation of

3 Interest	2023/24	
Deposit Account	£44.53	(Santander Savings Account)
CCLA Account	£659.58	
	<u>£704.11</u>	

4 Subscriptions As of 31st July there were 66 Full Members, 31 Bench Friends, 1 Temporary Member and 4 Life Members.

5 Merchandise Sales

	2023/24
Costume Sales	£284.58
Raffle (Love Bites)	£34.00
Raffle (Abigail's Party)	£16.97
Raffle (Pygmalion)	£64.60
	<u>£400.15</u>

Due to use of a common cash and electronic payment mechanisms the actual split between these sources may not be fully correct.

6 Donations

	2023/24
Havant Lottery	£390.00
Individual Donations	£500.72
	<u>£890.72</u>

Due to use of a common cash and electronic payment mechanisms the actual split between these sources may not be fully correct.

7 Scripts Not applicable this year

8 Ticket Sales

	Performances	Tickets Issued	Ticket Sales	Ticket Levy	Admin Cost	Total
			£	£	£	
Duets	5	247	£2,747.50	-£247.00	-£96.16	£2,404.34
Love Bites	8	472	£5,303.00	-£472.00	-£185.60	£4,645.40
The Father	5	193	£2,160.50	-£193.00	-£75.62	£1,891.88
Abigail's Party	8	736	£8,451.00	-£736.00	-£253.53	£7,461.47
Face the Music	1	-	£28.50			£28.50
Pygmalion	8	510	£5,713.00	-£510.00	-£171.39	£5,031.61
TOTALS			£24,403.50	-£2,158.00	-£782.30	£21,463.20

The Spring Ticket Levy is £1 per ticket sold (including for complementary tickets). Admin cost is 3.5% of ticket receipts. Face the Music ticket receipts is a 50% share with Chichester Fringe. Number of tickets sold not known.

9 Programme Sales

	Performances	Prog. Printed	Cash Take	Card Take.	TOTAL
			£	£	£
Duets	5	90	£135.00	£43.31	£178.31
Love Bites	8	160	£212.00	£94.53	£306.53
The Father	5	80	£114.00	£31.42	£145.42
Abigail's Party	8	200	£277.00	£94.54	£371.54
Pygmalion	8	145	£226.00	£62.99	£288.99
	34	675	£964.00	£326.79	£1,290.79

An approx. 1.5% fee is charged by the terminal provider for electronic card payments.

Due to use of a common cash and electronic payment system the actual split between these sources may not be fully correct.

10 Various Admin

None this year.

11 Governance Costs

	2023/24
Insurance	£407.36
Folders for Archive	£21.99
Google Workspace	£1.93
Audit (2022/23)	£100.00
	<u>£531.28</u>

12 Company Stage Management (CSM)

Costs for Pole and Rollers (£20) and Black Floor Paint (£107.40).

13 Touring

Totton entry fee for March 2024 of £26, though performance was eventually cancelled due to illness.

14 Rent

Bench Theatre has paid £1652.36 per month from August 2023 - July 2024 to The Spring Arts and Heritage Centre.

15 Membership Admin

Costs for laminating pouches (£7.60) and stamps and paper (£12.00).

16 Miscellaneous	2023/24
Membership Refund	£140.00
First Aid Training	£40.00
	£180.00

17 Performing Rights	2023/24
The Father	£444.00
Abigail's Party	£816.00
Abigail's Party (Music)	£319.15 (Invoiced as part of The Spring ticket sales receipts)
Dear Jack, Dear Louise	£510.00
Sense and Sensibility	£672.00
	£2,761.15

Duets Performing Rights paid for in 2022/23. Last Words and Pygmalion were rights free.

18 Programmes

Costs associated with printing programmes.

19 Set, Props & Costumes	Set	2023/24 Props	Costumes
Duets			
Love Bites			
The Father	£26.24		
Abigail's Party	£135.87	£7.99	
Pygmalion	£48.93		
	£211.04	£7.99	£0.00

Spring Brochure entry cost of £125 is subtracted for the box office receipts (except for Duets which was not charged for Brochure entry).

20 Publicity	Banners	2023/24 Flyers	Brochure	Photos
Duets	£40.00			£9.75
Love Bites	£40.00	£85.61	£125.00	£9.44
The Father	£40.00	£94.00	£125.00	
Abigail's Party	£40.00	£94.00	£125.00	£7.00
Pygmalion	£40.00	£94.00	£125.00	
Dear Jack Dear Louise		£94.00		
	£200.00	£461.61	£500.00	£26.19

Spring Brochure entry cost of £125 is subtracted for the box office receipts (except for Duets which was not charged for Brochure entry).

21 Fixed Assets

The Charity has no declared fixed assets

22 Current Assets

Current and Savings Accounts with Santander Business banking. CIOF Deposit Account with CCLA.
£5 cash in hand used as a float for programme sales.

23 Creditors	2023/24	2022/23
Amounts falling with one year	£0.00	£100.00 Independent examiner fee
Amounts falling due after one year	£0.00	£0.00
	£0.00	£100.00

For 2023/24 agreement reached with the Havant Light Opera (HLO) Treasurer to mutually audit each other's accounts free of charge.

24 Provision for liabilities	2023/24	2022/23
Provision for 6 months theatre rent	£9,914.16	£9,914.16
	£9,914.16	£9,914.16

Termination of the contract with The Spring requires 6 months notice, therefore Bench Theatre are liable for the next 6 months rent (6 x £1652.36). Including rent as a liability is a change in accounting practise for 2023/24 so the 2022/23 balance sheet has been adjusted accordingly.

25 Movements in Funds

	At 1st August 2023	Income	Expenditure	At 31st July 2024
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Funds:				
General funds	£23,381.92	£30,204.24	£24,904.02	£28,682.14
Total Unrestricted Funds	£23,381.92	£30,204.24	£24,904.02	£28,682.14

The Bench Theatre has no Restricted Funds or Endowment Funds in Financial Year 2023/24.

General Notes:

1. Because of the nature of the Bench's activities, there is usually some crossover of expenditure between years. For 2023/24, the performing rights for the September 2024 production ('Dear Jack, Dear Louise') and November 2024 production ('Sense and Sensibility') were paid in July 2024 therefore are accounted for in the 2023/24 financial year.
2. There may be residual income/expenditure relating to the July production that that will not show in the accounts until the next financial year. In this case these incomes or expenditures will be account for in the 2024/25 financial year.
3. A copy of this report will be archived on the Bench Theatre web-site. All members are welcome to see the detailed transactions