



HAVANT'S OWN THEATRE COMPANY - SINCE 1969

BENCH THEATRE

Statutory Accounts and Annual Report for the period 1 August 2024 - 31 July 2025

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website - www.benchtheatre.org.uk

Email: treasurer@benchtheatre.org.uk

Registered Charity No: 291935



Trustees' Annual Report 1 August 2024 - 31 July 2025

Charity Name Bench Theatre

Registered Number 291935

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

Bankers: The Co-operative Bank p.l.c., 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M4 4BE

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
Tas Halford	Chair	
David Penrose	Secretary	
Andrew Caple	Treasurer	

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	An unincorporated association as defined in the constitution
	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 2024/2025 the Bench performed the following main productions:

September 2024: "Dear Jack, Dear Louise" by Ken Ludwig. 5 performances.

November 2024: "Sense and Sensibility" by Jane Austin, adapted by Jessica Swale. 8 performances.

February 2025: "The Possibilities" by Howard Barker. 5 performances.

April 2025: "As You Like It" by William Shakespeare. 8 performances.

July 2025: "Stepping Out" by Richard Harris. 8 performance.

A short one-man performance of 'A Child's Christmas in Wales' by Dylan Thomas was performed three times at The Spring Arts and Heritage Centre in December 2024. In addition The Bench Theatre performed an extract from 'The Possibilities' at the Totton Drama Festival in March 2025.

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 £25,468/year as of 31st July 2025.

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

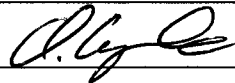

The Bench plans to continue to pursue its charitable object, retain and expand its membership, Friends and audiences, and refresh its profile in the Havant area and beyond, all within the context of its contract with The Spring (see above).

Independent Examiner

For the second year in a row, 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 given below.

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	18th August 2025

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 & 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:


1st September 2025



Bench Theatre

Statement of Financial Activities

For the Year Ended 31 July 2025

Income & Expenditure Account For The Year Ended

Notes

NON PRODUCTION INCOME

Interest	3	£944.81	£704.11	
Subscriptions	4	£5,787.58	£5,455.27	
Merchandise Sales	5	£318.13	£400.15	
Donations	6	£1,417.01	£890.72	
Miscellaneous	7	£308.00	£0.00	
Sub-total				£7,450.25
		£8,775.53		

PRODUCTION INCOME

Scripts	8	£47.96	£0.00	
Ticket Receipts	9	£27,388.00	£24,403.50	
Programme Sales	10	£1,286.70	£1,290.79	
Miscellaneous	11	£319.15	£0.00	
Sub-total				£25,694.29
		£29,041.81		

TOTAL INCOME

£37,817.34 £33,144.54

NON PRODUCTION EXPENDITURE

Various Admin	12	£10.79	£23.92	
Governance Costs	13	£0.00	£100.00	
Insurance	14	£409.26	£407.36	
Equipment & Staging (Company SM)	15	£999.98	£127.40	
Touring	16	£26.00	£26.00	
Rent	17	£21,708.20	£19,828.32	
Membership Admin	18	£20.40	£19.60	
Miscellaneous	19	£76.00	£180.00	
Sub-total				£20,712.60
		£23,250.63		

PRODUCTION EXPENDITURE

Performance Rights (Plays)	20	£2,076.40	£2,442.00	
Performance Rights (Music)	21	£92.55	£319.15	
Scripts	22	£295.74	£0.00	
Programmes	23	£0.00	£21.46	
Sets	24	£11.50	£213.02	
Props	24	£136.80	£7.99	
Costumes	24	£245.03	£0.00	
Banners	25	£42.00	£200.00	
Flyers and Posters	25	£470.00	£461.61	
Spring Brochure	25	£625.00	£500.00	
Photos	25	£9.00	£26.19	
Spring Ticket Levy	9	£2,462.50	£2,158.00	
Spring Card Fee	9	£868.62	£782.30	
Spring CDM Technician Hire	9	£326.25	£0.00	
Sub-total				£7,131.72
		£7,661.39		

TOTAL EXPENDITURE

£30,912.02 £27,844.32

EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE

£6,905.32 £5,300.22

Bench Theatre
Balance Sheet as at
31 July 2025

		2025	2025	2025	2024	2024	2024
	Notes	Restricted Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	£	Restricted Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	£
Fixed Assets							
The charity has no fixed assets	26	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Current Assets							
Current Account	27	£0.00	£8,389.54		£0.00	£10,803.05	
Savings Account	27	£0.00	£4,080.34		£0.00	£4,634.03	
COIF Account	27	£0.00	£23,195.11		£0.00	£13,340.06	
Cash In Hand	27	£0.00	£22.47		£0.00	£5.00	
Total Current Assets		£0.00	£35,687.46	£35,687.46	£0.00	£28,782.14	£28,782.14
Liabilities							
Creditors	28	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00	£0.00	
Provision for Liabilities	29	£0.00	£0.00		£0.00	£0.00	
Total Liabilities		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
NET CURRENT ASSETS	30	£0.00	£35,687.46	£35,687.46	£0.00	£28,782.14	£28,782.14
TOTAL FUNDS				£35,687.46			£28,782.14

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

3 Interest

	2024/25	
Deposit Account	£66.17	(Santander Bank, account now closed)
Instant Access Savings Account	£5.34	(cooperative bank)
35 Day Notice Savings Account	£18.25	(cooperative bank, account now closed)
CCLA Account	£855.05	
	<u>£944.81</u>	

	Members	Friends	Members	Friends
Waged	39	9		
Unwaged	23	20		
Under 25s	6			
	<u>68</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>31</u>
Life Members	5		4	

5 Merchandise Sales

	2024/25
Raffle (Sense & Sensibility)	£109.69
Costume Hire (to SSA)	£100.00
Raffle (Stepping Out)	£108.44
	<u>£318.13</u>

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

6 Donations

Havant Lottery	£379.50
Individual Donations	£1,020.04
	<u>£1,399.54</u>

7 Miscellaneous Income

	2024/25	
Refund of incorrect payment	£36.00	(Payment into Bench Theatre account made in error by Derek Callam, later refunded)
Refund for unused wood	£272.00	(Refund via Callum West for returned wood originally bought but not used for stage flooring)
	<u>£308.00</u>	

8 Scripts

	2024/25	
Stepping Out	£47.96	(4 scripts at £11.99 each)

9 Ticket Sales

	Performances	Tickets Issued	Ticket Sales	Ticket Levy	Admin Cost
Dear Jack, Dear Louise	5	285	£2,686.50	-£235.00	-£80.59
Sense and Sensibility	8	750	£7,925.00	-£684.00	-£237.75
A Child's Christmas in Wales	3	51	£195.50	-£25.50	-£6.84
The Possibilities	5	345	£3,348.50	-£343.00	-£100.45
As You Like It	8	403	£4,030.00	-£399.00	-£120.90
Stepping Out	8	776	£9,202.50	-£776.00	-£322.09

TOTALS	<u>37</u>	<u>2610</u>	<u>£27,388.00</u>	<u>-£2,462.50</u>	<u>-£868.62</u>
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The Spring deduct brochure ad, ticket levy, admin cost, PRS Incidental Music licence fee and CDM charges from the box office receipts before payment.

The Spring Ticket Levy is £1 per ticket sold (including for Bench Member/Friend & complementary tickets).

Admin cost is 3% of ticket revenue (to 31st March 2025) and 3.5% of ticket revenue (from 1st April 2025).

CDM fee (£15/hour) is the charge for The Spring Health and Safety oversight of Bench Theatre's Construction, Design and Manufacture activities.

10 Programme Sales

	Performances	Prog. Printed	Cash Take	Card Take	TOTAL
Dear Jack, Dear Louise	5	78	£106.00	£33.49	£139.49
Sense and Sensibility	8	180	£201.50	£100.42	£301.92
The Possibilities	5	90	£139.00	£74.84	£213.84
As You Like It	8	100	£173.00	£86.67	£259.67
Stepping Out	8	240	£267.40	£104.38	£371.78
	34	688	£886.90	£399.80	£1,286.70

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 mechanisms the actual split between these sources may not be fully correct.

11 Misc. Production Income

	2024/25	
PRS Licence Refund	£319.15	(Refund from The Spring for Interpolated PRS licence fee for 'Abigail's Party')
	£319.15	

12 Admin Costs

	2024/25
benchtheatre.org.uk domain renewal	£10.29
	£10.29

13 Governance Costs

None this year. Agreement reached with Havant Light Opera to mutually audit each other's accounts for no fee.

14 Insurance

	2024/25
Amateur Theatre Insurance	£409.26
	£409.26

15 Company Stage Management (CSM)

	2024/25
Calico for recovering flats	£79.99
Flame check of recovered flats	£27.54
Door Wedges	£9.00
Material for new flooring + staple gun	£781.25
Van hire to transport flooring material	£102.20
	£999.98

16 Touring

Totton entry fee for March 2025 of £26 for an abridged version of 'The Possibilities'

17 Rent

Bench Theatre has paid £1652.36 per month from August 2024 - Mar 2025 to The Spring Arts and Heritage Centre.
Bench Theatre has paid £2122.33 per month from April 2025 - July 2025 to The Spring Arts and Heritage Centre.

18 Membership Admin

Costs for stamps (£20.40).

19 Miscellaneous

	2024/25
Refund for incorrect payment to Bench	£36.00
Refund for membership not taken up	£40.00
	£76.00

20 Performing Rights (Plays)

	2024/25
The Possibilities	£500.00
The Possibilities (Totton)	£50.00
Stepping Out	£825.60
This Happy Breed	£700.80
	£2,076.40

'Dear Jack, Dear Louise' and 'Sense and Sensibility' Performing Rights paid in 2023/24. 'As You Like It' was rights free.

21 Performing Rights (Music - PRS)

	2024/25
Dear Jack, Dear Louise (Incidental)	£18.29
Sense and Sensibility (Incidental)	£36.58
Stepping Out (Incidental)	£37.68
	£92.55

Incidental music licence fee deducted by The Spring Arts and Heritage Centre from ticket revenue
No PRS copyrighted music was used in 'The Possibilities' or 'As You Like It'.

Applications were made to PPLPRS for pay music licence fees for 'Sense and Sensibility' and 'Stepping Out' but no responses received.

22 Scripts	2024/25
Stepping Out (11 scripts)	£135.88
This Happy Breed (13 scripts)	£159.86
	£295.74

23 Programmes

No costs submitted to the Bench Theatre for the printing of programmes in 2024/25.

	Set	2024/25 Props	Costumes
24 Set, Props & Costumes			
Dear Jack, Dear Louise		£41.50	
Sense and Sensibility		£72.00	£142.90
The Possibilities	£11.50	£23.30	
As You Like It			
Stepping Out			£102.13
	£11.50	£136.80	£245.03

	Banners	2024/25 Flyers	Brochure	Photos
25 Publicity				
Dear Jack, Dear Louise	£42.00			
Sense and Sensibility		£94.00	£125.00	£9.00
The Possibilities		£94.00	£125.00	
As You Like It		£94.00	£125.00	
Stepping Out		£94.00	£125.00	
SuperNova9		£94.00	£125.00	
	£42.00	£470.00	£625.00	£9.00

Spring Brochure entry cost of £125 is subtracted from the box office receipts.

26 Fixed Assets

The Charity has no declared fixed assets

27 Current Assets

Values provided are as of end of day 31st July 2025.

Current and Savings Accounts were with Santander Business banking, now switched to cooperative bank.

COIF Deposit Account with CCLA.

Cash in hand includes £5 cash used as a float for programme sales and a £17.47 cheque from Santander for savings interest.

	2024/25	2023/24
28 Creditors		
Amounts falling with one year	£0.00	£0.00
Amounts falling due after one year	£0.00	£0.00
	£0.00	£0.00

For 2024/25 agreement reached with the Havant Light Opera (HLO) Treasurer to mutually audit each other's accounts free of charge.

29 Provision for liabilities

	2024/25	2023/24
	£0.00	£0.00
	£0.00	£0.00

The Executive Committee have deemed that, given the recent strength in company performance, no provision for liabilities are needed.

This includes a re-assessment for provisions made in 2023/24 which, in hindsight, were not deemed as needed, hence readjusted to £0.

30 Movements in Funds

	At 1st August 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 31st July 2025 £
Unrestricted Funds:				
General funds	£28,782.14	£37,817.34	£30,912.02	£35,687.46
Total Unrestricted Funds	£28,782.14	£37,817.34	£30,912.02	£35,687.46

The Bench Theatre has no Restricted Funds or Endowment Funds in Financial Year 2024/245

General Notes:

1. Because of the nature of the Bench's activities, there is usually some crossover of expenditure between years. For 2025/26, the performing rights and scripts costs for the November 2025 production (This Happy Breed) were paid in July 2024 therefore are accounted for in the 2024/25 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 2025/26 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 should they wish.