

# **THE PLAYHOUSE, BACKWELL**

Registered Charity No 293300

Annual Report and Accounts for the year 01/09/2024 – 31/08/2025

## **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

J Coupe (Chairperson)  
F Milton (Hon. Treasurer)  
D Parker (Hon. Secretary)  
M Halstead (Deputy Chair)  
B Hooper  
R Fenton  
C Heaven  
R Morris (Co-Opted)

## **TRUSTEES**

A Milton  
L Wharram

The Playhouse, Backwell (more commonly known as Backwell Playhouse) is an unincorporated body operating under a Constitution and Rules last amended in 1985. It has members who support its objectives and pay a small annual subscription. It is run by a Management Committee of not more than 12 members who are elected by the members for a three-year term of office at the Annual General Meeting. The committee may also co-opt any member onto the committee for the period up to the next AGM. New committee members are sought from the general membership by invitation and through regular contact with members. The committee members elect the officers from amongst their number after the AGM each year. The Management Committee usually holds meetings approximately six times a year.

The Playhouse, Backwell  
23 Mariners Drive  
Backwell  
Bristol  
BS48 3HT

## **REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

I was honoured to have been elected to be the new Chair of the Playhouse Management Committee by my colleagues following the AGM last year, and I am able to look back on my first of three years in this role and see the continued growth and improvement of our wonderful theatre. Firstly though, I wanted to make a heartfelt thanks to Jenny Schaefer, who chaired the committee before me. Her hard work, commitment and dedication to the Playhouse is evident for everyone to see, and her tenure as Chair was hugely successful; her presence on the committee is missed.

Looking back on the last year, we have certainly fulfilled our constitutional goal to advance the education of the public in the arts. Our own in-house offerings gave us two very different, but equally enjoyable, plays for the audiences to enjoy. In November, we performed "A Bolt From The Blue", directed by Fiona Milton, a surrealist-comedy by David Tristram; I think many of us are still trying to work out the true meaning of the ending! We followed this in April with the World Premiere of "Fletcher's Carpet Promotion". We were delighted to be able to give writer/director Dee Parker the opportunity to put on the play and to continue our long tradition of performing works by new writers. Dee's 70's sit-com style play was a hit with the audiences and we are excited to confirm that we will be performing the follow-up, "Fletcher's Waterbed Dreams" in 2026.

The committee have also continued to support our bi-monthly Comedy Nights, with strong audiences enjoying five evenings of comedians through-out the year. Their success both in takings, and at the bar, has led the committee to make these a monthly occurrence for the 25/26 season, and we are hugely indebted to Rob Cauwood for his work in arranging the acts for us.

The film club continues to be a huge boon to the Playhouse and we are very grateful to their committee and all of the volunteers who work hard to make the film club a success. Due to its ongoing success, we invested significantly in improving the sound system for the cinema side of the Playhouse, and this was installed in August by Mike Halstead and his team of volunteers. A big thank you to Mike, Heloise and Steve for giving up their time to do this for us for free.

We have also been lucky enough to welcome outside companies to the Playhouse, and had wonderful performances from Steve Burley (with 'Tommy and Me'), Ship and Castle ('Nine Days In July'), Stepping Out ('Mother Christmas') and Bristol Musical Youth Productions ('Matilda The Musical'). We also welcomed back Nailsea Musicals for their performance of 'Mel Brooks' Young Frankenstein'.

We also had AliCaT Children and Theatre continue their youth classes throughout the year, culminating in a production of The Blue Bottle. Sadly they have decided to end their 16 year association with us and move to a new venue. We remain grateful for being such a huge part of the Playhouse and wish them all the best for the future. In the meantime, the Playhouse are looking at the new opportunities this will afford us.

After expanding our venue spaces the previous year including the foyer toilets refurbishment (though some costs fell within this financial year), we have had a quieter year, using the time for general maintenance and organisation. However, we have started refurbishing the foyer and bar, with thanks to Dee Parker and other volunteers for their work on the furniture now in place. The next stage will come in the new year and we look forward to sharing plans with you at the appropriate time.

We have also tried to increase our visibility in the community by taking part in the Walking Festival, the Backwell Summer Fun Day and even hosting our own open evening to show people what we do at the Playhouse.

The common theme throughout is the enormous gratitude the committee has to all the volunteers who give up their time and energy to help out at the Playhouse. There are too many to name, but to those who help out on the bar (especially Mary Gould, our licensee), with front of house, with shows, events and maintenance of the building, we are truly grateful for your help. On a personal note, I am also indebted to the committee for their work in keeping this amazing venue running, profitable and of huge value to the community.

Regarding the committee, Caroline Heaven has decided to step back from her role as our Membership Secretary after four years. Caroline has worked hard as part of the committee and we are thankful for all of her contributions. We have been lucky to have co-opted Rachael Morris onto the committee for the last couple of meetings, and she is standing for election at the AGM. The committee have further spaces available at the moment for others to join and get involved, either with specific roles or as a general member. If you are interested in joining the committee, please speak to a committee member at any of our events.

2025/26 is shaping up to be an exciting year. We have already put on a Youth Show, 'Debut', an evening of plays, songs and performances put together by the younger members of the Playhouse Company; proving the future of the Playhouse is very exciting and in good hands. We have 'The Sneeze' coming up at the end of November, a Christmas Celebration on the 20<sup>th</sup> December and the aforementioned "Fletcher's Waterbed Dreams" in April. We are also very excited to welcome NT Live to the Playhouse from January, with special performances on our cinema screen of the best of British Theatre.

2026 is also the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the Playhouse and we are planning a special celebration event next October. Watch this space for more details!

Jon Coupe  
31<sup>st</sup> October 2025

## **Trustees' Report 2025**

I have been investigating the responsibilities of a trustee as they apply to a group like ours and have listed below the responsibilities that I have been able to extract from various documents.

These responsibilities are as follows:

- ❖ To oversee the management and direction of the organisation.
- ❖ At all times to act in the best interests of the group and its stakeholders.
- ❖ To ensure that the committee carry out its duties in the best interests of the members.
- ❖ To ensure that the groups funds are used effectively
- ❖ To ensure that the property and the assets of the group are preserved and managed properly.
- ❖ To be aware of any legislative responsibilities and ensure that they are complied with.
- ❖ To make sure that the committee act impartially and ensure that no one group or section within the group benefits at the expense of another.

There may be further responsibilities that I have overlooked or may be added through time. I will maintain this list and update it as is appropriate.

I have been looking carefully at these responsibilities during my time as a trustee and can assure you that your committee and I have been applying these tests during that time.

In particular:

- ❖ I have attended most committee meetings to ensure that I understand how decisions are made and remain informed re activities, spend, etc.
- ❖ Group funds have and are being effectively managed as you will see in the accounts.
- ❖ Property and assets of the group are being well maintained.
- ❖ We have, to the best of my knowledge, met all legal requirements.
- ❖ No one group is being shown preference to another.

I hope that you are all in agreement with the above statements and will accept this report as a clear record of where we are as an organisation.

Les Wharram  
Backwell Playhouse Trustee  
31<sup>st</sup> October 2025

### **Treasurer's Report 2025**

Here we are once again at the end of another successful year! The committee continue to work with enthusiasm to keep the Playhouse financially healthy, and all the improvements make it worthwhile.

I feel I am repeating myself, however we have achieved capital expenditure in excess of £48000 in 2024 – 2025; the bulk being made up of the new toilet facilities and the solar panels (which will bear fruit in next year's accounts). This incredible spend has been made possible by grants we have received (both from public monies and a very kind private donation).

Looking forward to next year, sadly we have lost our outside hire from 'Alicat' Children Theatre, however we have increased the frequency of Comedy fundraising nights, and our new National Theatre Live performances will hopefully mitigate this loss.

Fiona Milton  
31<sup>st</sup> October 2025

### **Auditor's Report 2025**

Auditor's Report 2025

I have audited in depth the financial records for the Playhouse, Backwell. Records are recorded on Sage software and hardcopy backup is retained. These records go to make up the accounts for Backwell Playhouse. The accounts remain the responsibility of the committee. I am satisfied that the accounts for The Playhouse, Backwell to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025, bear a true and accurate reflection of the financial state of the theatre.

Catherine Jones (AAT level 3)  
3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025

**The Playhouse Backwell (Reg charity no 293300)**

**Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st August 2025**

<b>Income</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>	
Annual theatre membership	468	176	
surplus on inhouse productions	2262	1486	
fundraising events	1459	1590	
surplus on film club	2103	3456	
bar	6760	6815	
outside hire	8637	8483	
	<b>21689</b>		<b>22006</b>
 <b>Expenditure</b>			
PRS & PPL	518	473	
insurance	2233	2089	
fire safety	115	0	
advertising		50	
repairs & maint	787	432	
gardening & skip	1072	795	
Print & stationery		0	
Property taxes & utilities	263	285	
electricity	9379	12332	
cleaning	1362	1210	
sanitary hygiene	413	0	
website & internet	681	721	
card payment fees	371	383	
sundries	221	672	
	<b>17415</b>		<b>19442</b>
 Surplus for the year	<b>4274</b>		<b>2564</b>

**Movements on General Reserves for the year to 31st August 2025**

	<b><u>2025</u></b>	<b><u>2024</u></b>
Balance b/fwd	39302	40506
surplus for the year	4274	2564
	<b>43576</b>	<b>43070</b>
 less capital expenditure	48477	23259
grant for capital expenditure	24070	20000
adj prepayment / accrual	0	-509
	<b><u>19169</u></b>	<b><u>39302</u></b>

**Balance Sheet as at 31st August 2025**

	<b><u>2025</u></b>	<b><u>2024</u></b>
General reserve	19169	39302
represented by bank balance	19169	39302

---

**Notes to the accounts****Capital Expenditure**

toilets & paintstore	16584
speaker system	2256
fridges	348
solar panels	22300
fencing	1220
lean to & rehearsal room	5769
	<b>48477</b>

**Surplus In-house Productions**

	Tickets	Costs	
Bolt from the blue	2142	812	1330
Fletchers Carpet	2304	1372	932
			<b>2262</b>
Surplus on Film Club	4598	2495	<b>2103</b>
Surplus comedy fundraiser	2846	1387	<b>1459</b>

**Outside Hire Breakdown**

Nailsea Musicals	240
Alicat	4784
Ship & Castle	1320
Michelle Bedford	387
Bristol Musical Youth	1690
Steve Burley	216
	<b>8637</b>