

MILTON KEYNES FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

England & Wales · Charity number 293601

Details

Status Registered

Legal form Other

Registered 1986-02-10

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address 21 The Glebe
Lavendon
Olney
MK46 4HY

Phone 07835254078

Email kris@aandktaylor.co.uk

Website www.miltonkeynesyoungmusicianoftheyear.co.uk

Activities

Objects: THE OBJECT OF THE ASSOCIATION SHALL BE TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC IN THE ARTS AND IN PARTICULAR THE ARTS OF MUSIC, SPEECH AND DRAMA AND DANCE IN ALL THEIR BRANCHES.

Activities: Organisation and management of an annual festival of the arts in three sections, music, dance and speech & drama. The festival offers both competitive and non-competitive classes principally designed to encourage children and young people to perform, thus furthering their interest and education in the arts. In addition the festival may support a gala concert in which selected participants perform.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space
- **What:** Education/training, Arts/culture/heritage/science
- **Who:** Children/young People, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Bedford
- Buckinghamshire
- Central Bedfordshire
- Milton Keynes
- Northamptonshire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-06-30	£44,740	£42,934	-	-
2024-06-30	£41,384	£37,112	-	-
2023-06-30	£35,335	£38,462	-	-
2022-06-30	£32,249	£31,024	-	-
2021-06-30	£10,296	£7,680	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Adrian Boynton		2016-09-18
Christine Lesley TAYLOR		
Claire Wilson		2024-11-17
Eloise Ferry		2016-09-18
Isabel de Sousa		2024-11-17
JANICE HUGHES		
James William Evans		2026-05-19
Joseph Thomas Lawrence Cairns		2026-05-19
Ka Wing Ho		2024-11-17
Keeley Robertson		2022-12-21
Keeva Buckley		2024-02-11
Leanne Hughes		2024-11-17
MR Adam Scott		2016-09-18
Michael Guy		2024-11-17
Michelle Okowa		2024-11-17
Nicholas James Harper		2024-11-17
Sharon Elizabeth Alexander		2026-05-19

MILTON KEYNES FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

England & Wales - Charity number 293601

Accounts

MILTON KEYNES FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

For the Year Ending 30 June 2025

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts (The Festival) is an unincorporated Association registered with the Charity Commission (Registered Number 293601).

The Festival operates in accordance with a constitution dated June 1968. Under this constitution, the Trustees are the Officials for the time being, made up of a Chair, Vice Chair, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer. Management of the Festival is vested in the General Committee consisting of the Officials together with other members all being elected annually at an Annual General Meeting.

Trustees

The trustees for the year under review have been:

Vice Presidents

Adrian Boynton
Jocelyn Lord (resigned November 2025)

Chair Pat Haig (resigned November 2025)

Secretary Janice Hughes
Treasurer Christine Taylor FCA

Music and Drama

Alistair Haig (resigned November 2025)
Michael Guy (app'd November 2024)
Gina Sharp (app'd November 2024)
Michelle Okowa (app'd November 2024)
Adrian (Ka Wing) Ho (app'd November 2024)
Isabelle de Sousa (app'd November 2024)

Dance

Adam Scott Lewis
Keeva Buckley
Kerry Bright (resigned November 2024)
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Claire Wilson (app'd November 2024)
Nick Harper (app'd November 2024)
Eloise Ferry
Leanne Hughes (app'd November 2024)

Trustees are generally appointed from volunteers who have experience in the Festival movement. Briefing is provided by the section heads in their duties and they are given training in the Festival's child protection policies.

Affiliation

The Festival is a member festival of the British and International Federation of Festivals. The Dance section is also a qualifying event for the All England Dance competition, and regularly sponsors dancers to compete in the UK Young dancer competition.

Auditors

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Church Crookham,
Fleet, Hampshire, GU52 6HL

Bankers

Charities Aid Foundation,
25 Kings Hill,
West Malling
Kent
ME19 4JQ

National Westminster Bank,
501 Silbury Boulevard,
Saxon Gate East
Milton Keynes
MK9 3ER

AIMS OF THE ORGANISATION

The object of the festival, as set out in the constitution, is to advance the education of the public in the Arts and in particular the Arts of Music, Speech and Drama, and Dance in all their branches.

In furtherance of its objects it has powers to:

- 1 hold or promote annual competitive festivals;
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OBJECTIVES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Festival takes place each year between February and March and consists of three separate section events, Dance, Music, and Speech and Drama in pursuit of the charity's educational objective. The Festival is primarily structured around the needs of children and young people who account for over 90% of its entrants. It aims to develop an audience and support for the performing arts by encouraging parents, friends and the public to attend at its events. In addition, it may offer a number of classes for adult, amateur performers of any age.

The Festival may present workshops, to assist artistic development, and concerts, which severally promote the festival, give entrants a more structured performance opportunity and act as a showcase for their talents.

Within this structure, the committee seeks to provide an environment for performers which is supportive, encouraging, does not expose them to feelings of failure and, insofar as the festival is competitive, has rules necessary to ensure fairness and applies them. Opportunities for young people to by perform in public can be very limited. Artistic development cannot be fully satisfied only by taking examinations.

FINANCIAL RESULTS

Income was slightly down, but remains strong. Although dance suffered from the AED qualification cycle, entries were still healthy. Music and Drama sections are not profitable as such, but are supported by the success of the Dance section. A profit was made overall.

Catering costs continue to increase in all sections. The provision of reasonable catering is essential, given the long days worked by adjudicators and volunteers. In 2025 less of the offering was provided by volunteers and more bought in from a professional caterer.

Our use of technology is also critical. In Dance we use an on-line entry system provided by All England Dance, which offers the ability not only to manage entries but also to co-ordinate timetables and play music for the individual performances. In a qualifying year this also means that the clerical task of co-ordinating qualification information is removed. The system is paid for by a three-year licence fee (£850) and a levy per performance (2025 £805, 2024 £1,354). The Music and Drama sections use an online entry system provided by Mushroom Ltd and billed annually (2025 £568, 2024 £526).

AED kindly loan laptops and iPads for use with the Connect system, and in 2025 we also invested in a festival laptop for use with the Connect system.

All sections now have the use of SumUp card machines. These enable audience members to pay for tickets and other purchases electronically. This has had the unintentional side effect of encouraging more audience members to enter the auditorium, increasing footfall in the Music and Drama audiences, and of facilitating the purchase by parents of lanyards for solo dancers and of lanyards and medals for groups which are placed, which we do not provide for free.

RESERVES AND PUBLIC BENEFIT

Our reserves remain healthy. Venues and adjudicators all have to be booked in advance and expect to be paid even if an event has to be cancelled. The reserves at the balance sheet date would enable us to meet these costs without any income arising. The Music section also needs to be able to cover the cost of piano hire and tuning if we were to lose our major sponsor, Kawai UK Ltd.

The Trustees are confident that sufficient reserves have been built up to enable them to meet any costs or lost revenue that may arise from a hiatus in their events.

In 2025 we again applied for and received the Body of Persons Approval (BOPA) which obviates the need for individual child licences in all three sections.

The committee has considered the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on the provision of public benefit. Charity law requires the use of the Festival's funds to further the charitable objectives of the festival to be considered by the trustees each year. The Committee will continue each year to consider how best to use these surplus funds to achieve the charity's objective in the future.

Dance has recently increased our place medals to the first four places. This differs from many Federation festivals, but does mean that a number of entrants who in past years would have

ended outside the medal placings were able to take away a more significant souvenir. This is popular with participants, and we feel it to be a good use of our charitable funds.

We provide an annual Bursary intended to provide opportunities for talented performers to further develop their skills. We continued to provide this in the Dance section in 2025 and our adjudicator nominated Vivian McClean to receive the award, which was paid in October 2025, after our period end, when she began studying at Bird College. In 2025 we also awarded bursaries to four dancers enabling them to enter the All England Dance Young Dancer award. All four dancers made it through the audition stage to the knock out round and two dancers appeared in the final held at the Royal Opera House.

In the Drama section a small prize is awarded to an outstanding entry to the Drama section. Awards are also made to the first three places for musicians selected to appear in the YMoY.

RISK POLICY

The principal risks affecting the festival centre around the need to provide a safe environment for our young participants to perform in, and the financial threat to an organisation which has always been self-funding. An annual risk assessment is carried out using the model provided by our umbrella organisation the British and International Federation of Festivals (BIFF). The financial risks have been dealt with above.

Our child protection policy is revisited in each financial year, following the guidelines developed by our umbrella organisation, and administered by the Honorary Secretary, Janice Hughes. Our policy is published on our website and in all syllabi and programmes issued by the Festival.

In addition to our general obligations to meet child protection standards the awards of Body of Persons Approval by Milton Keynes Council will depend on our continuing to meet those standards.

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as a Festival, we are required to ensure processes are in place to ensure that all the personal data which we handle regularly through entry forms, volunteer details and sponsor or donor information are safeguarded. Names, addresses, dates of birth, email addresses are all personal data which processed as part of festival planning. Under the legislation we are required handle such data with care, and retain it only insofar as it is required for the purposes for which it is collected and that all subjects are aware of the data we hold and have the opportunity to request its deletion.

SECTION REPORTS

Dance Report

2025 was not an All England year, but as we are already operating near capacity we are obliged to limit new schools to those based in the Milton Keynes area. We have a growing interest from Asian dance schools, where the entry numbers are increasing each year. Total entry income, although reduced, was therefore still very healthy and box office money reflected this too.

A small Gala is held as part of the main event, to celebrate the individual skills of our solo performers. This generates no additional income / costs, other than small cash prizes for the winners of each age group as chosen by the adjudicator.

As well as competitive entry sections which reflect the AED qualification process, we provide a Platform section for those who wish to perform in a non-competitive arena and an Own Choreography section for young dancers wishing to develop in that area.

Our volunteers provide their services for free and are supplemented by work experience students from a local performing arts college, Arts1.

Music, Ensembles, Choirs & Drama sections

Our 2025 festival was our 57th annual festival event and we were thrilled to have a wonderful number of performers taking part and feedback from adjudicators, parents, teachers and performers was very positive, as always. Numbers were up across the board, (1,250 performances overall, 2024 – 1268), but we were particularly pleased with the large, increasing, entry in our piano sections, 493 performances in 2024. In all last year's festival saw almost 4,000 individual performers in solo, ensemble and group presentations. Our adjudicators and audiences were highly complimentary about all the performances.

2025 was the first year that the new team of Gina Sharp (festival admin and reception), Isabel de Abreu (singing, speech and drama and Orchestras, Choirs and Barbershop Day), Michelle Okawa (multi-section support and catering), Adrian Ho (piano) and Mike Guy (instrumental and Young Musician) were in charge of the offering, so its success reflects great credit on them.

The festival offers both competitive and non-competitive classes in all genres, with each entrant receiving a graded certificate and a hand-written feedback sheet with constructive comments from one of our specialist professional adjudicators. There is also the opportunity to win a medal or trophy and possibly some prize money.

In music, up to 8 of the best performers of age 18 and under are invited back to showcase their talents once again in our Milton Keynes Young Musician of the Year competition. Each receives a special certificate, trophy and an amount of prize money and one will be named Milton Keynes Young Musician of the Year. Every performer in this year's showcase was highly praised by our judges Gill Johnston and Jena Pang, both acclaimed musicians, teachers and adjudicators. The winner of this year's title was violinist Sean Lau, with second and third places to pianists Adrian and Aaron Tai. The other finalists were pianist Yiding Wang, violinists Ezra Bail and Reeka Chanelle Manglicmot, flautist Georgia Haydon and clarinettist Theodora Colvin. Many congratulations to all of them. Two special guest performances by Milton Keynes Young Singer of the Year 2025 Rosie Freear and the Calliope Flute Quartet added an extra level of entertainment to the YMoY event, which was hosted by Festival Vice-President Mr Adrian Boynton.

PUBLICITY

The website is kept up to date and we appear on Twitter and two Facebook pages which are used to promote the festival and advise entrants of any news or impending closing dates.

The Music and Drama organisers look out for new prospective entrants / drama schools / community choirs to approach about the festival. Over 200 syllabuses are sent out by mail to prospective Music and Drama entries and in addition section leaders message them via their

social networking platform / email. Dance is already operating at capacity and entry is restricted to performers from those schools who are situated within a 15 mile radius of our venue, with a few exceptions for schools which have been regular participants for many years.

Thanks and Acknowledgements.

We are privileged to have the continued sponsorship of Kawai Pianos who donate several of their beautiful concert grand and upright pianos to our music festival for our performers' use and we are grateful for their generous support and for also agreeing to extend their patronage to the Milton Keynes Young Musician of the Year competition. Without their ongoing support the festival would not be able to accept as many piano entrants as we do, so we are ever grateful for their kindness and generosity and to their Milton Keynes retail partner, Bonners Music. Kawai have agreed to continue their support in 2026.

We are greatly indebted to members of the general and section committees who support the festival by their work throughout the year. In addition, we enjoy the support of a number of volunteers who help with the actual festival events; their help is always needed and very much appreciated.

Finally, we are most grateful to the management, staff and volunteers of The Venue at Walton High School for their help over the years and for their assistance with arrangements for the festival events.

Janice Hughes
Secretary

Christine Taylor
Treasurer

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 30 June 2025 which are set out on pages 8 to 11.

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 charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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.

Signed



*Andrew Paul ACA
15 Parsons Close,
Church Crookham,
Fleet,
Hampshire, GU52 6HL*

23 April 2026

Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts

Receipts and Payments for the period ending 30 June 2025

	2024 - 2025	2023 - 2024
Incoming Resources		
Festival Sections		
Festival Entries	21,402	24,234
Box Office - Admissions	16,020	13,809
Programme Sales	1,020	1,140
Other Income	5,086	2,070
Note 1	43,528	41,253
Other Income		
Note 2	1,212	131
Total income	44,740	41,384
Resources Expended		
Festival sections		
Adjudicators fees and expense	10,877	13,069
Hire of halls and equipment	12,302	11,122
Medals and Prizes	2,981	3,893
Syllabus and Programme printing	4,169	1,463
Catering costs	6,929	4,153
Licence and copyright fees	1,385	1,880
Note 1	38,643	35,580
General costs		
Annual General Meeting & Expenses	1,260	
Bank Charges	325	55
BIFF Conference fees	150	380
BIFF costs	713	768
Other Admin costs	155	329
Note 3	2,603	1,532
Total resources expended	41,246	37,112
Operating (deficit) / surplus for the year	£3,494	£4,272
Young Musician of the Year net costs	548	621
	2,946	3,651
Anniversary Fund:		
Dance Bursaries	920	760
Music Bursaries & Prizes	220	450
Note 4	1,140	1,210
Surplus for the year	1,806	2,441
Opening funds	35,318	32,877
Closing Funds	37,124	£35,318

Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts

Funds Available for the period ending 30 June 2025

Bank Balances	2024-2025	2023-2024
NatWest Current	21,297	25,255
CAF Cash	8,892	5,268
CAF Gold	<u>6,935</u>	<u>4,795</u>
Unrestricted Funds	<u><u>£37,124</u></u>	<u><u>£35,318</u></u>

Janice Hughes
Secretary

Christine Taylor
Treasurer

Note 1 Section Surpluses and Deficits

	Dance		Music		Drama		Music & Drama		Choir / Ensembles		Total	
	2024 - 25	2024	2024 - 25	2024 - 25	2025	2024	2024 - 25	2024	2024 - 25	2024	2024 - 25	2024
Incoming Resources												
Festival Sections												
Festival Entries	11,301	13,272	7,264	2,263	9,527	10,716	574	786	21,402	24,234		
Box Office - Admissions	10,017	9,612	2,796	1,812	4,608	2,769	1,394	1,428	16,019	13,809		
Programme Sales	1,020	1,140	0	0			0		1,020	1,140		
Other Income	5,086	2,070	0	0			0		5,086	2,070		
	27,424	0	0	0	14,135	12,945	0	1,968	2,214	43,527	41,253	
Resources Expended												
Festival sections												
Adjudicators costs	3,905	4,072	4,791	1,721	6,512	8,450	459	547	10,876	13,069		
Hire of halls and equipment	7,957	7,775	2,542	1,043	3,585	2,934	760	413	12,302	11,122		
Medals and Prizes	1,165	2,312	1,334	412	1,746	1,581	70		2,981	3,893		
Syllabus and Programme	2,138	1,259	1,748	200	1,948	204	83		4,169	1,463		
Catering costs	3,737	2,563	1,739	1,034	2,773	1,396	419	194	6,929	4,153		
Licence and copyright fees	816	1,354	376	182	558	526	11		1,385	1,880		
	0	0	19,335	0	0	15,091		1,802	1,154	0	0	35,580
Section (Deficit) / Surplus	7,706	6,759	-2,470	-517	-2,987	-2,146		166	1,060	4,885	5,673	
General income									(1,212)	(131)		
General costs									2,603	1,532		
YMOY									548	621		
Revenue Bursaries									1,140	1,210		
(Net costs)										3,079	3,232	
(Deficit) / Surplus for period										1,806	£2,441	

Note 2

General Income:

	2025	2024
Bank interest	160	131
Hotel refunds re bookings in 2024	1,052	-
	<u>1,212</u>	<u>131</u>

Note 3

General Costs:

	2025	2024
Bank charges	325	55
General non-attributable costs	155	418
Equipment purchases	1,260	-
Insurance	350	350
Conference fees	150	380
Other costs	363	329
Total non-section costs	<u>£2,603</u>	<u>£1,532</u>

	2025	2024
Young Musician of the Year	548	621
	-	-
	<u>548</u>	<u>£621</u>

The Young Musician of the Year event is held every year to celebrate outstanding performances from soloists in our Music festival.

Note 4

Bursaries and prizes

The Festival regularly puts aside funds for bursaries intended to benefit talented performers in the Dance, Music and Speech sections of the Festival.

Funds were again set aside from reserves for a £500 bursary for a dancer going on to study full time in the Autumn (see Trustee report page 4). Bursaries were also awarded to fund four dancers to enter the UKYD national dance competition. Monetary prizes were also awarded to performers in the Dance Gala section, from the Speech section of the festival and to performers in the YMoY.

Actual payments in 2024 (2023) were as follows

	2025	2024
2025 YMoY awards	220	225
2025 Music & Vocal prizes		75
2024/25 UK Young dancer of the Year	420	410
2024 dance bursary	500	500
	<u>£1,140</u>	<u>£1,210</u>

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Co Chairs

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In the Dance section we charge lower entry fees for the Platform section (appropriate for school children wanting professional adjudication for their examination portfolios and for dancers who have not entered a festival before) to make this section more accessible to a wider range of performers. We are also actively seeking to involve other sections of the community, including local Indian dance schools.

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outside the medal placings were able to take away a more significant souvenir. This is popular with participants, and we feel it to be a good use of our charitable funds.

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RISK POLICY

The principal risks affecting the festival centre around the need to provide a safe environment for our young participants to perform in, and the financial threat to an organisation which has always been self-funding. An annual risk assessment is carried out using the model provided by our umbrella organisation the British and International Federation of Festivals (BIFF). The financial risks have been dealt with above.

Our child protection policy is revisited in each financial year, following the guidelines developed by our umbrella organisation, and administered by the Honorary Secretary, Janice Hughes. Our policy is published on our website and in all syllabi and programmes issued by the Festival.

In addition to our general obligations to meet child protection standards the awards of Body of Persons Approval by Milton Keynes Council will depend on our continuing to meet those standards.

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as a Festival, we are required to ensure processes are in place to ensure that all the personal data which we handle regularly through entry forms, volunteer details and sponsor or donor information are safeguarded. Names, addresses, dates of birth, email addresses are all personal data which processed as part of festival planning. Under the legislation we are required handle such data with care, and retain it only insofar as it is required for the purposes for which it is collected and that all subjects are aware of the data we hold and have the opportunity to request its deletion.

SECTION REPORTS

Dance Report

2024 was an All England year, but as we are already operating near capacity we are obliged to limit new schools to those based in the Milton Keynes area. We have a growing interest from Asian dance schools, where the entry numbers are increasing each year. Total entry income was therefore very healthy and box office money reflected this too.

A smaller Gala is held as part of the main event so this generates no additional income / costs.

Music, Ensembles, Choirs & Drama sections

Our 2024 festival was our 56th annual festival event and we were thrilled to have a wonderful number of performers taking part and feedback from adjudicators, parents, teachers and performers was very positive, as always. Numbers were up across the board, (1268 performances overall, 2023 – 1156), but we were particularly pleased with the large, increasing, entry in our piano sections, 493 performance in 2024, following an already healthy 439 in 2023.

Following our soloists' weekend seven of our talented music festival performers were invited back to take part in our virtual Milton Keynes Young Musician of the Year showcase and we were delighted to welcome Nadia Hinson and concert pianist / teacher Craig Greene to provide constructive feedback.

The winner chosen was pianist Waika Hagan Chu who played a most impressive performance of the Chopin Nocturne Op 15 No 1 and Piazzolla – Suite para Piano Op 2 with Reeka Chanelle Manglicmot - piano and violin in second place and violinist Sean Lau in third place.

The other highly accomplished finalists were Matias Yung - piano and cello, Mason Huo - piano, Evie Cooper - violin and Yiding Wang - piano. Fabulous guest performances were provided by Milton Keynes Young Singer of the Year 2024 Hope Dionisio-Sagau and adult festival entrant, pianist Vicky Letsman added an extra level of entertainment to the event, which was hosted by Festival Vice President Mr Adrian Boynton.

Our 2024 event was the final year that Pat Haig and her support team, husband Alistair and daughter Emily, presided over the organisation of our Drama and Music events, although Pat retains her role as Chairman of the Festival. It is a measure of Pat's contribution over the years that on her retirement 5 additional organisers have been recruited to fulfil her role!

Pat has spent considerable effort in recruiting, training and supporting the replacement team. Whilst they will all assist across the sections their individual roles will be: Michael Guy – Instrumental and Young Musician of the year, Adrian Ho – Piano, Isabelle de Sousa - Drama and Ensembles and Choir day Gina Sharp - Festival Admin and Reception and Michelle Okowa - cross section support and catering. We look forward to working with them in 2025.

PUBLICITY

The website is kept up to date and we appear on Twitter and two Facebook pages which are used to promote the festival and advise entrants of any news or impending closing dates.

All section organisers look out for new prospective entrants / drama schools / community choirs to approach about the festival. Over 200 syllabuses are sent out by mail to prospective Music and Drama entries and in addition section leaders message them via their social networking platform / email.

Thanks and Acknowledgements.

We are privileged to have the continued sponsorship by Kawai Pianos who donate several of their beautiful concert grand and upright pianos to our music festival for our performers' use and we are grateful for their generous support and for also agreeing to extend their patronage to the Milton

Keynes Young Musician of the Year competition. Without their ongoing support the festival would not be able to accept as many piano entrants as we do, so we are ever grateful for their kindness and generosity and to their Milton Keynes retail partner, Bonners Music. Kawai have agreed to continue their support in 2025.

We are greatly indebted to members of the general and section committees who support the festival by their work throughout the year. In addition, we enjoy the support of a number of volunteers who help with the actual festival events; their help is always needed and very much appreciated.

Finally, we are most grateful to the management, staff and volunteers of The Venue at Walton High School for their help over the years and for their assistance with arrangements for the festival events.

Christine Taylor
Treasurer

Patricia Haig
Chair

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 30 June 2024 which are set out on pages 8 to 11.

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 charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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.

Signed



*Andrew Paul ACA
15 Parsons Close,
Church Crookham,
Fleet,
Hampshire, GU52 6HL*

20 April 2025

Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts

Receipts and Payments for the period ending 30 June 2024

	2023 - 2024	2022 - 2023
Incoming Resources		
Festival Sections		
Festival Entries	24,234	20,065
Box Office - Admissions	13,809	11,300
Programme Sales	1,140	1,250
Other Income	2,070	2,680
Note 1	41,253	35,295
 Other Income		
Note 2	131	40
Total income	41,384	35,335
 Resources Expended		
Festival sections		
Adjudicators fees and expense	13,069	10,233
Hire of halls and equipment	11,122	11,687
Medals and Prizes	3,893	3,606
Syllabus and Programme printing	1,463	1,960
Catering costs	4,153	4,896
Licence and copyright fees	1,880	3,007
Note 1	0	35,580
 General costs		
Annual General Meeting & Expenses		521
Bank Charges	55	96
BIFF Conference fees	380	570
BIFF costs	768	290
Other Admin costs	329	482
Note 3	1,532	1,959
Total resources expended	37,112	37,348
Operating (deficit) / surplus for the year	£4,272	£(2,013)
Young Musician of the Year net costs	621	559
	3,651	(2,572)
 Anniversary Fund:		
Dance Bursaries	760	500
Music Bursaries & Prizes	450	55
Note 4	1,210	(555)
(Deficit) / Surplus for the year	2,441	(3,127)
Opening funds	32,877	36,004
Closing Funds	£35,318	£32,877

Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts

Funds Available for the period ending 30 June 2024

	2023 - 2024	2022 - 2023
Bank Balances		
NatWest Current	25,255	25,810
CAF Cash	5,268	2,388
CAF Gold	<u>4,795</u>	<u>4,679</u>
Unrestricted Funds	<u><u>£35,318</u></u>	<u><u>£32,877</u></u>

Christine Taylor
Treasurer

Note 1 Section Surpluses and Deficits

	Dance		Music	Drama	Music & Drama		Choir / Ensembles		Total	
	2023 - 24	2023	2023 - 24	2023 - 24	2024	2023	2023 - 24	2023	2023 - 24	2023
Incoming Resources										
Festival Sections										
Festival Entries	13,272	11,372	7,771	2,405	10,716	7,991	786	702	24,234	20,065
Box Office - Admissions	9,612	7,797	1,179	1,590	2,769	2,808	1,428	695	13,809	11,300
Programme Sales	1,140	1,000				250			1,140	1,250
Other Income	2,070	2,452				228			2,070	2,680
	26,094	22,621	8,950	3,995	12,945	11,277	2,214	1,397	41,253	35,295
Resources Expended										
Festival sections										
Adjudicators costs	4,072	3,754	6,831	1,619	8,450	6,140	547	339	13,069	10,233
Hire of halls and equipment	7,775	7,659	2,084	850	2,934	3,794	413	234	11,122	11,687
Medals and Prizes	2,312	2,377	1,581		1,581	1,144		85	3,893	3,606
Syllabus and Programme	1,259	1,511	204		204	449		0	1,463	1,960
Catering costs	2,563	2,273	1,192	204	1,396	2,623	194	0	4,153	4,896
Licence and copyright fees	1,354	2,215	526		526	777		15	1,880	3,007
	19,335	19,789	12,418	2,673	15,091	14,927	1,154	673	35,580	35,389
Section (Deficit) / Surplus	6,759	2,832	(3,468)	1,322	(2,146)	(3,650)	1,060	724	5,673	(94)
General income									(131)	(40)
General costs									1,532	1,959
YMOY									621	555
Revenue Bursaries									1,210	559
(Net costs)									(3,232)	(3,033)
(Deficit) / Surplus for period									£2,441	£(3,127)

Note 2

General Income:

	2024	2023
Bank interest	131	40
	<u>131</u>	<u>40</u>

Note 3

General Costs:

	2024	2023
Bank charges	55	96
General non-attributable costs	418	-
SumUp Cash readers	-	482
Insurance	350	290
Conference fees	380	570
Other costs	329	521
Total non-section costs	<u>£1,532</u>	<u>£1,959</u>

Gala net costs

	2024	2023
Young Musician of the Year	621	559
	-	-
	<u>£621</u>	<u>£559</u>

The Young Musician of the Year event is held every year to celebrate outstanding performances from soloists in our Music festival.

No performers fees were charged for either event and the costs of both are reflected in the appropriate financial statements.

Note 4

Bursaries and prizes

The Festival regularly puts aside funds for bursaries intended to benefit talented performers in the Dance, Music and Speech sections of the Festival.

Funds were again set aside from reserves for a £500 bursary for a dancer going on to study full time in the Autumn. (See Trustee report page 4.) Bursaries were also awarded to fund four dancers to enter the UKYD national dance competition. A prize was also awarded to a performer from the Speech section of the festival and to performers in the YMoY.

Actual payments in 2024 (2023) were as follows

	2024	2023
2024 YMoY awards	225	-
2024 Music & Vocal prizes	75	55
2024UK Young dancer of the Year	410	-
2023 dance bursaries	500	500
	<u>£1,210</u>	<u>£555</u>

MILTON KEYNES FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

England & Wales - Charity number 293601

Accounts

MILTON KEYNES FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

For the Year Ending 30 June 2023

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts (The Festival) is an unincorporated Association registered with the Charity Commission (Registered Number 293601).

The Festival operates in accordance with a constitution dated June 1968. Under this constitution, the Trustees are the Officials for the time being, made up of a Chair, Vice Chair, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer. Management of the Festival is vested in the General Committee consisting of the Officials together with other members all being elected annually at an Annual General Meeting.

Trustees

The trustees for the year under review have been:

Vice Presidents

Jocelyn Lord Adrian Boynton

Co Chairs

Pat Haig
Kerry Bright (resigned chair Jan 2024)

Honorary Secretary

Janice Hughes

Honorary Treasurer

Christine Taylor FCA

Music and Drama

Alistair Haig
Emily Haig

Dance

Adam Scott Lewis
Eloise Ferry
Kerry Bright
Keeley Robertson
Keeva Buckley (appointed Jan 2024)
Sharon Hart (resigned Jan 2024)

Trustees are generally appointed from volunteers who have experience in the Festival movement. Briefing is provided by the section heads in their duties and they are given training in the Festival's child protection policies.

Affiliation

The Festival is a member festival of the British and International Federation of Festivals.

Auditors

Formal audit is not required by virtue of the limited financial turnover. Independent examination of the financial accounts is carried out by:

Andrew Paul ACA
15 Parsons Close,
Church Crookham,
Fleet, Hampshire, GU52 6HL

Bankers

Charities Aid Foundation,
25 Kings Hill,
West Malling
Kent
ME19 4JQ

National Westminster Bank,
501 Silbury Boulevard,
Saxon Gate East
Milton Keynes
MK9 3ER

AIMS OF THE ORGANISATION

The object of the festival, as set out in the constitution, is to advance the education of the public in the Arts and in particular the Arts of Music, Speech and Drama, and Dance in all their branches.

In furtherance of its objects it has powers to:

- 1 hold or promote annual competitive festivals;
- 2 present and promote public performances, concerts and recitals;
- 3 affiliate to the British and International Federation of Festivals and to further the objects of that Federation.

OBJECTIVES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Festival takes place each year between February and March and consists of three separate section events, Dance, Music, and Speech and Drama in pursuit of the charity's educational objective. The Festival is primarily structured around the needs of children and young people who account for over 90% of its entrants. It aims to develop an audience and support for the performing arts by encouraging parents, friends and the public to attend at its events. In addition, it may offer a number of classes for adult, amateur performers of any age.

The Festival may present workshops, to assist artistic development, and concerts, which severally promote the festival, give entrants a more structured performance opportunity and act as a showcase for their talents.

Within this structure, the committee seeks to provide an environment for performers which is supportive, encouraging, does not expose them to feelings of failure and, insofar as the festival is competitive, has rules necessary to ensure fairness and applies them.

Opportunities for young people to by perform in public can be very limited. Artistic development cannot be fully satisfied only by taking examinations.

COVID-19

In 2021 the Festival world was heavily impacted by the virus and government guidelines on social distancing in the world of performance events.

For 2022 and 2023 we were delighted to be able to return to a more normal offering.

FINANCIAL RESULTS

Income was strong in most sections in 2023, apart from the Speech and Drama section where entries were down. Costs did increase across the board, however, resulting in a small loss overall.

Catering costs increased substantially in all sections. The provision of reasonable catering is essential, given the long days worked by adjudicators and volunteers. In 2023 less of the offering was provided by volunteers and more bought in from a professional caterer.

Our use of technology was also updated. In Dance in 2023 we invested in an on-line entry system provided by All England Dance, which offers the ability not only to manage entries but also to co-ordinate timetables and play music for the individual performances. In a qualifying year this will also mean that the clerical task of co-ordinating qualification information is removed. The system is paid for by a three-year licence fee (£850) and a levy per performance (£1,214).

We also invested in SumUp card machines this year for use in the Dance section, which had the unintentional side effect of encouraging the purchase by parents of lanyards for solo dancers and of lanyards and medals for groups which are placed, which we do not provide for free.

In this year representatives attended the BIFF National Conference in person, resulting in additional costs. In the previous period an on-line conference meant that there were limited costs involved.

RESERVES AND PUBLIC BENEFIT

Our reserves remain healthy. Venues and adjudicators all have to be booked in advance and expect to be paid even if an event has to be cancelled. The reserves at the balance sheet date would enable us to meet these costs without any income arising. The Music section also needs to be able to cover the cost of piano hire and tuning if we were to lose our major sponsor, Kawai UK Ltd.

The Trustees are confident that sufficient reserves have been built up to enable them to meet any costs or lost revenue that may arise from a hiatus in their events.

In 2023 we again applied for and received the Body of Persons Approval (BOPA) which obviates the need for individual child licences in all three sections.

The committee has considered the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on the provision of public benefit. Charity law requires the use of the Festival's funds to further the charitable objectives of the festival to be considered by the trustees each year. The Committee will continue each year to consider how best to use these surplus funds to achieve the charity's objective in the future.

In the Dance section we charge lower entry fees for the Platform section (appropriate for school children wanting professional adjudication for their examination portfolios and for dancers who have not entered a festival before) to make this section more accessible to a wider range of performers. We are also actively seeking to involve other sections of the community, including local Indian dance schools.

We also decided to increase our place medals to the first four places. This increased our medal costs, (which were already high since we had used up our existing stocks) but did mean that a number of entrants who in past years would have ended outside the medal placings were able to take away a more significant souvenir, which we felt to be a good use of our charitable funds.

In our 50th anniversary year we embarked on the provision of Bursaries intended to provide opportunities for talented performers to further develop their skills. We continued to provide this in the Dance section in 2023 and our adjudicator nominated Hannah Digby to receive the award, which was paid in October 2023, after our period end, when she began studying at Laine Theatre Arts.

In the Music section a small bursary was awarded to one of the piano competitors to fund entry to a national piano competition.

We put funds aside in the Choirs section, to provide bursaries for state schools for which the cost of transport to a festival venue can be prohibitive, although there were no applications for this support.

RISK POLICY

The principal risks affecting the festival centre around the need to provide a safe environment for our young participants to perform in, and the financial threat to an organisation which has always been self-funding. An annual risk assessment is carried out using the model provided by our umbrella organisation the British and International Federation of Festivals (BIFF). The financial risks have been dealt with above.

Our child protection policy is revisited in each financial year, following the guidelines developed by our umbrella organisation, and administered by the Honorary Secretary, Janice Hughes. Our policy is published on our website and in all syllabi and programmes issued by the Festival.

In addition to our general obligations to meet child protection standards the awards of Body of Persons Approval by Milton Keynes Council will depend on our continuing to meet those standards.

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as a Festival, we are required to ensure processes are in place to ensure that all the personal data which we handle regularly through entry forms, volunteer details and sponsor or donor information are safeguarded. Names, addresses, dates of birth, email addresses are all personal data which processed as part of festival planning. Under the legislation we are required handle such data with care, and retain it only insofar as it is required for the purposes for which it is collected and that all subjects are aware of the data we hold and have the opportunity to request its deletion.

SECTION REPORTS

Dance Report

2023 was not an All England year, but there has been a significant change to AED qualifying dances – additional small groups, open sections, separate lyrical sections, etc so entries reflected this. We also have a growing interest from Asian dance schools, where the entry numbers are increasing each year. Total entry income was therefore very healthy and box office money reflected this too.

There was no separate Dance Gala event in 2023. A smaller Gala is held as part of the main event so this generates no additional income / costs.

Music, Ensembles and Choirs

Our 2023 festival was our 55th celebratory event and we were thrilled to have a very healthy increase in the number of performers taking part in our music section, particularly in the Piano section. Feedback from parents, teachers and performers was very positive as always.

Following our soloists' weekend seven of our talented music festival performers were invited back to take part in our virtual Milton Keynes Young Musician of the Year showcase and we were delighted to welcome Gill Johnston and Martin Wakely to provide constructive feedback and encouragement to what was an impressive programme. The judges were unanimous in their decisions and highly complimentary about each performers' playing. Each performer was presented with a finalists' trophy, a small amount of prize money and certificate and the impressive piano and cello performance of Matias Yung was rewarded with the title of Milton Keynes Young Musician of the Year 2023. Second place went to Tham Luanghvisut, saxophonist, and third place went to talented pianist Rebecca Bazlov.

Drama

Our Drama section, also held at Walton High School, is a 2 day event. For Drama we use two rooms (including stage and auditorium on Sunday). Entries in 2023 were unfortunately down, affecting both entry fees and door money. Programme sales were also down – an outline programme was available on-line and not everyone wanted a hard copy.

PUBLICITY

The website is kept up to date and we appear on Twitter and two Facebook pages which are used to promote the festival and advise entrants of any news or impending closing dates.

All section organisers look out for new prospective entrants / drama schools / community choirs to approach about the festival. Over 200 syllabuses are sent out by mail to prospective Music and Drama entries and in addition section leaders message them via their social networking platform / email.

Thanks and Acknowledgements.

We are privileged to have the continued sponsorship by Kawai Pianos who donate several of their beautiful concert grand and upright pianos to our music festival for our performers' use and we are grateful for their generous support and for also agreeing to extend their patronage to the Milton Keynes Young Musician of the Year competition. Without their ongoing support the festival would not be able to accept as many piano entrants as we do (over 400 performances in 2023) so we are ever grateful for their kindness and generosity and to their Milton Keynes retail partner, Bonners Music. Kawai have agreed to continue their support in 2024.

We are greatly indebted to members of the general and section committees who support the festival by their work throughout the year. In addition, we enjoy the support of a number of

volunteers who help with the actual festival events; their help is always needed and very much appreciated.

Finally, we are most grateful to the management, staff and volunteers of The Venue at Walton High School for their help over the last few years and for their assistance with arrangements for the festival events.

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 30 June 2023 which are set out on pages 8 to 11.

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 charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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.

Signed



*Andrew Paul ACA
15 Parsons Close,
Church Crookham,
Fleet,
Hampshire, GU52 6HL*

29 April 2024

Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts

Receipts and Payments for the period ending 30 June 2023

	2022 - 2023	2021 - 2022
Incoming Resources		
Festival Sections		
Festival Entries	20,065	16,330
Box Office - Admissions	11,300	11,773
Programme Sales	1,250	2,185
Other Income	2,680	1,795
Note 1	35,295	32,083
Other Income		
	40	
Note 2	40	166
Total income	35,335	32,249
Resources Expended		
Festival sections		
Adjudicators fees and expense	10,233	10,175
Hire of halls and equipment	11,687	11,634
Medals and Prizes	3,606	1,199
Syllabus and Programme printing	1,960	1,226
Catering costs	4,896	1,836
Licence and copyright fees	3,007	454
Note 1	35,389	26,524
General costs		
Annual General Meeting & Expenses	521	-
Bank Charges	96	96
BIFF Conference fees	570	0
BIFF costs	290	290
Other Admin costs	482	139
Note 3	1,959	525
Total resources expended	37,348	27,049
Operating (deficit) / surplus for the year	£(2,013)	£5,200
Young Musician of the Year net costs	559	329
Dance Gala costs	-	1,396
	(559)	(1,725)
	(2,572)	3,475
Anniversary Fund:		
Dance Bursaries	500	500
Music Bursaries	55	-
Note 4	(555)	(500)
(Deficit) / Surplus for the year	(3,127)	2,975
Opening funds	36,004	33,029
Closing Funds	£32,877	£36,004

Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts

Funds Available for the period ending 30 June 2023

	2022 - 2023	2021 - 2022
NatWest Current	25,810	32,071
CAF Cash	2,388	1,503
CAF Gold	<u>4,679</u>	<u>2,430</u>
Unrestricted Funds	<u>£32,877</u>	<u>£36,004</u>

Note 1 Section Surpluses and Deficits

	Dance		Music	Drama	Music & Drama		Choir / Ensembles		Total	
	2022 - 23	2022	2022 - 23	2022 - 23	2023	2022	2022 - 23	2022	2022 - 23	2022
Incoming Resources										
Festival Sections										
Festival Entries	11,372	9,661	5,763	2,228	7,991	5,864	702	805	20,065	16,330
Box Office - Admissions	7,797	7,315	1,271	1,537	2,808	3,597	695	861	11,300	11,773
Programme Sales	1,000	1,005	200	50	250	110	0	80	1,250	2,185
Other Income	2,452	1,434	194	34	228	360	0	0	2,680	1,794
	22,621	19,415	7,428	3,849	11,277	10,921	1,397	1,746	35,295	32,082
Resources Expended										
Festival sections										
Adjudicators costs	3,754	3,436	4,703	1,437	6,140	6,247	339	492	10,233	10,175
Hire of halls and equipment	7,659	7,623	2,778	1,016	3,794	3,297	234	714	11,687	11,634
Medals and Prizes	2,377	182	1,144	0	1,144	953	85	64	3,606	1,199
Syllabus and Programme	1,511	0	378	71	449	352	0	43	1,960	1,225
Catering costs	2,273	1,077	2,033	590	2,623	585	0	174	4,896	1,836
Licence and copyright fees	2,215	237	656	121	777	210	15	7	3,007	454
	19,789	13,385	11,692	3,235	14,927	11,644	673	1,494	35,389	26,523
Section (Deficit) / Surplus	2,832	6,030	(4,264)	614	(3,650)	-723	724	252	(94)	5,559
General income									(40)	(166)
General costs									1,959	815
YMOY									559	329
Dance Gala										1,396
Revenue Bursaries									555	500
(Net costs)									(3,033)	(2,750)
(Deficit) / Surplus for period									£(3,127)	£2,975

Note 2

General Income:

	2023	2022
Bank interest	40	6
Dbase refund	-	160
	<u>40</u>	<u>£166</u>

Note 3

General Costs:

	2023	2022
Bank charges	96	96
General non-attributable costs	-	139
SumUp Cash readers	482	-
Insurance	290	290
Conference fees	570	-
Other costs	521	-
Total non-section costs	<u>£1,959</u>	<u>£525</u>

Gala net costs

	2023	2022
Young Musician of the Year	559	329
Dance Gala	-	1,396
	<u>£559</u>	<u>£1,725</u>

The Young Musician of the Year event is held every year to celebrate outstanding performances from soloists in our Music festival.

The Gala Dance event was a one-off event held at the beginning of the previous period to celebrate the winners of the on-line solo dance sections and to give regular participants who were going on to further education a last chance to perform on the stage at Walton High.

No performers fees were charged for either event and the costs of both are reflected in the appropriate financial statements.

Note 4

Bursaries

The Festival regularly puts aside funds for bursaries intended to benefit talented performers in Dance and Music.

Funds were again set aside from reserves for a £500 bursary for a dancer going on to study full time in the Autumn. (See Trustee report page 4.) A small bursary was paid in the Music section, to enable a participant from 2022 to enter a national piano competition.

Actual payments in 2023 (2022) were as follows

	2023	2022
2022 Piano Bursary	55	-
2021 / 2022 dance bursaries	500	500
	<u>£555</u>	<u>£500</u>

MILTON KEYNES FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

England & Wales - Charity number 293601

Accounts

MILTON KEYNES FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

For the Year Ending 30 June 2022

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts (The Festival) is an unincorporated Association registered with the Charity Commission (Registered Number 293601).

The Festival operates in accordance with a constitution dated June 1968. Under this constitution, the Trustees are the Officials for the time being, made up of a Chair, Vice Chair, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer. Management of the Festival is vested in the General Committee consisting of the Officials together with other members all being elected annually at an Annual General Meeting.

Trustees

The trustees for the year under review have been:

Vice Presidents

Jocelyn Lord

Adrian Boynton

Co Chairs

Jo Waller (resigned 21 December 2022)

Pat Haig

Kerry Bright (appointed 21 December 2021)

Honorary Secretary

Janice Hughes

Honorary Treasurer

Christine Taylor FCA

Music and Drama

Alistair Haig

Emily Haig

Maureen Smith (resigned 21 December 2022)

Dance

Adam Scott Lewis

Fiona Harris (resigned 21 December 2022)

Eloise Ferry

Sharon Hart

Kerry Bright

Keeley Robertson (app'd 21 December 2022)

Trustees are generally appointed from volunteers who have experience in the Festival movement. Briefing is provided by the section heads in their duties and they are given training in the Festival's child protection policies.

Affiliation

The Festival is a member festival of the British and International Federation of Festivals, of which Her Majesty the Queen is patron.

Auditors

Formal audit is not required by virtue of the limited financial turnover. Independent examination of the financial accounts is carried out by:

Andrew Paul ACA

15 Parsons Close,

Church Crookham,

Fleet, Hampshire, GU52 6HL

Bankers

Charities Aid Foundation,
25 Kings Hill,
West Malling
Kent
ME19 4JQ

National Westminster Bank,
501 Silbury Boulevard,
Saxon Gate East
Milton Keynes
MK9 3ER

AIMS OF THE ORGANISATION

The object of the festival, as set out in the constitution, is to advance the education of the public in the Arts and in particular the Arts of Music, Speech and Drama, and Dance in all their branches.

In furtherance of its objects it has powers to:

- 1 hold or promote annual competitive festivals;
- 2 present and promote public performances, concerts and recitals;
- 3 affiliate to the British and International Federation of Festivals and to further the objects of that Federation.

OBJECTIVES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Festival takes place each year between February and March and consists of three separate section events, Dance, Music and Speech and Drama in pursuit of the charity's educational objective. The Festival is primarily structured around the needs of children and young people who account for over 80% of its entrants. It aims to develop an audience and support for the performing arts by encouraging parents, friends and the public to attend at its events. In addition, it may offer a number of classes for adult, amateur performers of any age.

The Festival may present workshops, to assist artistic development, and concerts, which severally promote the festival, give entrants a more structured performance opportunity and act as a showcase for their talents.

Within this structure, the committee seeks to provide an environment for performers which is supportive, encouraging, does not expose them to feelings of failure and, insofar as the festival is competitive, has rules necessary to ensure fairness and applies them.

Opportunities for young people to by perform in public can be very limited. Artistic development cannot be fully satisfied only by taking examinations. In 2021 individual performances took place on the various online platforms, giving our participants the opportunity to develop their skills in solo and to receive constructive criticism from skilled and experienced professionals.

Recognising that our participants were missing out on the live performance opportunities that lie at the heart of our offering we provided an additional Gala Dance event in the current year at the end of July 2021, after our period end, where the winners of all 2021 on line Dance sections were invited to perform on the stage at Walton High. No performers were charged for this event and performance opportunities were enhanced by offering those who had danced at our event regularly over the last four years the chance to perform in a Leavers section.

COVID-19

In 2021 the Festival world was heavily impacted by the virus and government guidelines on social distancing in the world of performance events. Initial plans for a reduced 'live' event for 2021 were replaced with plans for on-line 'virtual' events, based on successful examples from around the Festival world.

The Dance section chose to develop a Google Classrooms approach, inviting solo dancers to contribute their performances for adjudication in the normal classes, over the Easter Holiday break. Our adjudicator Dr Nathan James, has some experience in this area and was able to provide helpful adjudication delivered by Facebook at the conclusion of the event.

The Music Festival chose to use private YouTube presentations, with links provided to the various adjudicators and participants and feedback provided in the same way. Both approaches worked well and a reduced but successful festival took place.

For 2022 we were delighted to be able to return to a more normal offering. The Drama section entry was strong enough to warrant 3 adjudicators and although the Music section instrumental entries were down this year both piano and voice entries were strong. The Dance section was a qualifying event for the All England Dance finals and saw over 2,500 performances across the 8 days of the festival.

FINANCIAL RESULTS

It is difficult to compare Income and expenditure patterns for 2021 and 2022 since in 2021 entry income in all sections of the Festival reflected only solo performances due to Covid-19., and "door money" did not arise, so we lost the usual healthy income generated from audience members for all sections.

In 2022 the festival showed an overall surplus of £2,975, (2021 a surplus of £2,616). The financial statements are prepared on a cash basis, so invoices are not reflected until paid, nor income recognised until actually received. The surplus included £1,049 of costs which related to 2021, not paid until 2022. It also includes the net costs of the Dance Gala referred to in Note 3. Given the changes in the financial profile, the section results are presented in a different format this year, with BIFF membership fees and Insurance presented in general costs rather than allocated to individual sections.

"Other income" comes from lanyard sales in all sections and a dance workshop. Additional funds are generated by the sale of medals for group performances. The usual donation from a stall holder who provides photographs and videos was received in 2022 but not in 2021.

The principal costs of the festival are venue costs and the employment of professional adjudicators, whose work is such an important element of the education and development of entrants and upon whose skill and approach the good reputation of the festival rests.

Adjudicator's rates are set by the British and International Federation of Festivals, while venue hire is negotiated directly between the festival and the venue providers. In 2021, whilst overall adjudicator costs were still a significant proportion of outgoings, because of the on-line nature of the festival there was no requirement for overnight accommodation. In 2022 these costs reverted to a more familiar £10,175, which also reflected an increase in hotel accommodation costs. (2021

£3,703, 2020 £9,674). Adjudicator's and Hall costs for the Dance Gala are reflected in the net Gala costs referred to above.

In 2021 performance space was not needed and printing and programme costs significantly reduced. Incidental costs, such as medals and trophies were also reduced, since the stock of medals from previous years proved sufficient for most 2021 needs and no trophies were awarded in the main sessions. A small number of trophies were awarded in the Young Musician of the Year section.

The licence fees heading in Note 1 includes the use of the on-line entry system for Music and Drama and AED fees. Given the disruption to charges from BIFF for both subscriptions and insurances, these have been shown as a line in the general costs section rather than allocated out to different sections. These costs in 2020 effectively reflect two years subscriptions and one year's insurance, since when the 2020 invoice was due, the Federation office was in lockdown and the invoice was not issued until the following financial year, with the result that 2021 costs are higher.

The Income and Expenditure account also includes the 2020 Dance Bursary which is paid in arrears, once it is confirmed that the recipient has begun further training.

Funds at the year-end show a total of £36,004 (£33,029). At the period end funds are held in three different bank accounts. CAF Cash had £1,503, CAF Gold £2,430 (both of which accounts can be operated on-line) and there remained £32,071 in NatWest.

RESERVES AND PUBLIC BENEFIT

Despite the issues experienced in 2020 and 2021, our reserves remain healthy. Venues and adjudicators all have to be booked in advance and expect to be paid even if an event has to be cancelled. The reserves at the balance sheet date would enable us to meet these costs without any income arising. The Music section also needs to be able to cover the cost of piano hire and tuning if we were to lose our major sponsor, Kawai UK Ltd.

The Trustees are confident that sufficient reserves have been built up to enable them to meet any costs or lost revenue that may arise from a hiatus in their events.

In 2022 we again applied for and received the Body of Persons Approval (BOPA) which obviates the need for individual child licences in all three sections.

The committee has considered the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on the provision of public benefit. Charity law requires the use of the Festival's funds to further the charitable objectives of the festival to be considered by the trustees each year. The Committee will continue each year to consider how best to use these surplus funds to achieve the charity's objective in the future.

In the Dance section we charge lower entry fees for the Platform section (appropriate for school children wanting professional adjudication for their examination portfolios and for dancers who have not entered a festival before) to make this section more accessible to a wider range of performers. We are also actively seeking to involve other sections of the community, including local Indian dance schools.

We put funds aside, to provide bursaries for state schools for which the cost of transport to a festival venue can be prohibitive.

In our 50th anniversary year we embarked on the provision of Bursaries intended to provide opportunities for talented performers to further develop their skills. We continued to provide this in the Dance section in 2022 and our adjudicator nominated Grace Farbon to receive the award, which was paid in October 2022, after our period end, when she began studying at Northern Ballet.

RISK POLICY

The principal risks affecting the festival centre around the need to provide a safe environment for our young participants to perform in, and the financial threat to an organisation which has always been self-funding. An annual risk assessment is carried out using the model provided by our umbrella organisation the British and International Federation of Festivals (BIFF). The financial risks have been dealt with above.

Our child protection policy is revisited in each financial year, following the guidelines developed by our umbrella organisation, and administered by the Honorary Secretary, Janice Hughes. Our policy is published on our website and in all syllabi and programmes issued by the Festival.

In addition to our general obligations to meet child protection standards the awards of Body of Persons Approval by Milton Keynes Council will depend on our continuing to meet those standards.

In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as a Festival, we are required to ensure processes are in place to ensure that all the personal data which we handle regularly through entry forms, volunteer details and sponsor or donor information are safeguarded. Names, addresses, dates of birth, email addresses are all personal data which processed as part of festival planning. Under the legislation we are required handle such data with care, and retain it only insofar as it is required for the purposes for which it is collected and that all subjects are aware of the data we hold and have the opportunity to request its deletion. A good example of this is the deletion of video performances after the on line event (see below).

SECTION REPORTS

Dance Report

In 2022 our Dance Festival offering returned to a more normal pattern. All concerned were anxious to get back to a live theatre so in July at the beginning of our accounting period we arranged for a live Gala event where all the winning dancers from our 2021 online event were invited back, to perform in three sections and a winner chosen by Dr James in Junior, Inter and Senior sections and an overall Gala Star. 36 dancers took part. We also invited all dancers going on to further education to perform for one last time on our stage. 15 dancers took part in this section of the Gala. It proved a welcome return to our main purpose.

Normally the 2021 festival would have been a qualifying event for the All England Dance competition, but following the Covid crisis Milton Keynes became a qualifier in 2022 for the rescheduled 2022 national event. Around 800 individual dancers took part in some 2,600, solo, duet, trio, quartet and group performances, across 11 different categories of dance throughout the 10 days of the festival. Our adjudicator was Deborah Norris - a renowned Contemporary teacher

and choreographer who is currently Programme Manager of Rambert 2 and a faculty member of the Rambert School.

We were fortunate enough to be able to give senior dancers a chance to attend two contemporary workshops given by Debbie during the festival which were very well received by the dancers attending and parents watching.

400 of those performances and 51 groups qualified for a place in the Regional finals and we were delighted to see many of those who qualified with Milton Keynes moving on through the Regionals to the National Finals in July, with many placing amongst the top dancers in the country.

Debbie awarded our bursary for further dance training to Grace Farbon of the Sinead Loughnane Academy.

Music, Ensembles and Choirs

Our 2022 festival was our first live festival since lockdown and we were thrilled to have a wonderful number of performers taking part and feedback from parents, teachers and performers was very positive, with everyone glad to be back to almost normal. It was so lovely to see familiar faces and also to welcome new entrants and their families and friends. It is fair to say that we all needed to get some normality back in our lives and a focus for our artistic endeavours.

Following our soloists' weekend seven of our talented music festival performers were invited back to take part in our virtual Milton Keynes Young Musician of the Year showcase and we were delighted to welcome Dr John Byron and Mr Anthony Williams to provide constructive feedback and encouragement to what was an impressive and sophisticated programme. Both judges were unanimous in their decisions and highly complimentary about each performers' playing. Each performer was presented with a finalists' trophy, a small amount of prize money and certificate and the impressive piano performance of Alex Wyatt was rewarded with the title of Milton Keynes Young Musician of the Year 2022. Second place went to Ellen Zeng, violinist, who played Mozart – 3rd Violin Concerto in G Major (K216) 1st Movement and Bartók - Romanian Dances Movements 4, 5 and 6 and third place went to Reece Carly Manglicmot with a highly praised performance of the Prokofiev Sonata No 3 in A Minor Op 28. If you would like to see Alex's winning performance, please go to the Young Musician page of our website www.miltonkeynesfestival.org

We are so privileged to have the continued sponsorship by Kawai Pianos who donate several of their beautiful concert grand and upright pianos to our music festival for our performers' use and we are grateful to Neil and Tom for their generous support and for also agreeing to extend their patronage to the Milton Keynes Young Musician of the Year competition. Without their ongoing support the festival would not be able to accept as many piano entrants as we do (over 400 performances in 2022) so we are ever grateful for their kindness and generosity.

Drama

Around 469 individual entries were received in 69 sections and adjudications provided by Rebecca Vines, Marcia Carr and Julie McLoughlin. Additional help was provided by Jenaya Smith, a local LAMDA adjudicator, who stepped in at short notice when one of the other adjudicators succumbed to illness. It was, as always, pleasure to hear the performers and listen to the well-received and always constructive feedback from our panel of adjudicators.

PUBLICITY

The website is kept up to date and we appear on Twitter and two Facebook pages which are used to promote the festival and advise entrants of any news or impending closing dates.

All section organisers look out for new prospective entrants / drama schools / community choirs to approach about the festival. Over 200 syllabuses are sent out by mail to prospective Music and Drama entries and in addition section leaders message them via their social networking platform / email.

Thanks and Acknowledgements.

The trustees express their thanks to Kawai UK Ltd for their contributions to the running costs of the festival and to all those who donate bursaries, prize money and trophies for the competition. Kawai have agreed to continue their support in 2023.

We are greatly indebted to members of the general and section committees who support the festival by their work throughout the year. In addition, we enjoy the support of a number of volunteers who help with the actual festival events; their help is always needed and very much appreciated.

Finally, we are most grateful to the management, staff and volunteers of The Venue at Walton High School for their help over the last few years and for their assistance with arrangements for the festival events.

Hon Chair

Patricia Haig

Hon Treasurer

Christine Taylor BA FCA

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 30 June 2022 which are set out on pages 9 to 12.

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 charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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.

Signed



*Andrew Paul ACA
15 Parsons Close,
Church Crookham,
Fleet,
Hampshire, GU52 6HL*

30 April 2023

Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts

Receipts and Payments for the period ending 30 June 2022

	2021 - 2022	2020-2021
Incoming Resources		
Festival Sections		
Festival Entries	16,330	9,514
Box Office - Admissions	11,773	0
Programme Sales	2,185	0
Other Income	1,795	781
Note 1	32,083	10,295
Other Income		
Note 2	166	1
Total income	32,249	10,296
Resources Expended		
Festival sections		
Adjudicators fees and expenses	10,175	3,703
Hire of halls and equipment	11,634	0
Piano moving	0	760
Medals and Prizes	1,199	121
Syllabus and Programme printing	1,226	774
Catering costs	1,836	0
Licence and copyright fees	454	770
Note 1	26,524	6,128
General costs		
Annual General Meeting	-	-
Bank Charges	96	78
BIFF Conference fees	0	0
BIFF costs	290	830
Other Admin costs	139	144
Note 3	525	1,052
Total resources expended	27,049	7,180
Operating surplus for the year	5,200	3,116
Young Musician of the Year costs	329	-
Dance Gala costs	1,396	-
	3,475	3,116
Anniversary Fund:		
Dance Bursaries	500	500
Note 4	500	500
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	2,975	2,616
Opening funds	33,029	30,413
Closing Funds	£36,004	£33,029

Milton Keynes Festival of the Arts

Funds Available for the period ending 30 June 2022

Bank Balances		
NatWest Current	32,071	13,722
CAF Cash	1,503	5,882
CAF Gold	<u>2,430</u>	<u>13,425</u>
Unrestricted Funds	<u>£36,004</u>	<u>£33,029</u>

Note 1 Section Surpluses and Deficits

	Dance		Music	Drama	Music & Drama	Choir / Ensembles		Total	
	2021 - 22	2021	2021 - 22	2021 - 22	2021	2021 - 22	2021	2022	2021
Incoming Resources									
Festival Sections									
Festival Entries	9,661	4,435	3,160	2,704	5,079	805		16,330	9,514
Box Office - Admissions	7,315		1,958	1,639		861		11,773	
Programme Sales	1,005		800	300		80		2,185	
Other Income	1,434	781	300	60		0		1,794	781
	19,415	5,216	6,218	4,703	5,079	1,746		32,082	10,295
Resources Expended									
Festival sections									
Adjudicators costs	3,436	920	4,042	2,205	2,783	492		10,175	3,703
Hire of halls and equipment	7,623	0	2,373	924		714		11,634	0
Medals and Prizes	182		953	0	121	64		1,199	121
Piano re 2020	0		0	0	760	0		0	760
Syllabus and Programme	830	31	204	148	743	43		1,225	774
Catering costs	1,077	0	298	287	0	174		1,836	
Licence and copyright fees	237	147	103	107	623	7		454	770
	13,385	1,098	7,973	3,671	5,030	1,494		26,523	6,128
Section Surplus / (Deficit)	6,030	4,118	(1,755)	1,032	49	252		5,559	4,167
General income								166	1
General costs								235	222
BIFF payments								290	830
YMOY								329	0
Dance Gala								1,396	0
Revenue Bursaries								500	2,750
Surplus for period		£4,118			£49			£2,975	£2,616

Note 2**General Income:**

	2022	2021
Bank interest	6	1
Dbase refund	160	0
	<u>£166</u>	<u>£1</u>

Note 3**General Costs:**

	2022	2021
Bank charges	96	78
General non-attributable costs	139	144
Insurance Current period	290	290
Conference fees	0	0
Other Biff costs	0	540
Total non-section costs	<u>525</u>	<u>£1,052</u>

Gala net costs

	2022	2021
Young Musician of the Year	329	0
Dance Gala	1,396	0
	<u>£1,725</u>	<u>£0</u>

The Young Musician of the Year event is held every year to celebrate outstanding performances from soloists in our Music festival.

The Gala Dance event was held at the beginning of the period to celebrate the winners of the on-line solo dance sections and to give regular participants who were going on to further education a last chance to perform on the stage at Walton High.

No performers fees are charged for either event and the costs of both are reflected in these 2022 financial statements.

Note 4 Bursaries

The Festival regularly puts aside funds for bursaries intended to benefit talented performers in Dance and Music.

Funds were again set aside from reserves for a £500 bursary for a dancer going on to study full time in the Autumn. (See Trustee report page 5.) No bursary was awarded in the Music section.

Actual payments in 2022 (2021) were as follows

	2022	2021
2021 / 2020 dance bursaries	<u>£500</u>	<u>£500</u>