

MEMBERS' REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The members present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015)"

Objectives and Activities

Big Telly Theatre Company is one of the longest standing theatre companies in NI. Our work is centred around theatre, game, technology, and place. We design professional theatre productions, site specific, live experiential art, immersive games and participatory community driven projects throughout Northern Ireland and internationally. With work spanning over 38 years, the company has a reputation for innovation and accessibility. We work across sectors, using arts to deliver objectives for health, education, heritage, tourism, economic development, social development, rural development and town and city regeneration. As a company, we seek to innovate how and where culture is made and performed and how theatre can be used as a tool to regenerate and serve the community to create long term impact.

Our work is multi-platform and cross-sectoral, fueled by a belief in the intrinsic value of arts practice and its potential to deliver a range of educational, economic, and social outcomes. Influences in our work to date include, gaming and escape rooms, computer hacking, burner phones, AI, AR, emotional computing, and binaural sound. The company's range and scale of work is unparalleled, with its reputation for innovation built upon distinctive professional theatre productions which tour nationally and internationally; creative collaborations; and pioneering community-based participation projects.

The company is extremely proud of its regional identity, and our programme of work reflects a continuing commitment to the local area combined with the ambition and capacity to extend our work within the global market, becoming ambassadors for the skills and creativity of Northern Ireland and placing it firmly on the world stage.

In 24/25 we worked with 135 creative personnel, with freelance artist fees totalling £128,208.

Our international partnerships provide opportunities to artists to work outside Northern Ireland - The Worst Cafe in the US (Belfast, Philadelphia & New York). We also offer artists free professional development support with regards to agent and casting director connections, funding guidance.

MEMBERS' REPORT (CONTINUED)(INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)
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24/25

Partnerships- Police Service of Northern Ireland, The Commission for Victims and Survivors, CAN - Compass Advocacy Network, Women's Aid Federation of NI, Belfast International Arts Festival, Origin Theatre 1st Irish Festival NYC, Tiny Dynamite Philadelphia, Flowerfield Arts Centre Portstewart, Centre for Cultural Value Leeds, Culture Ireland, Fun Palaces, Colliers Estate Agents Belfast, Councils & Government bodies; MEA, Tourism Ireland, Causeway Coast and Glens BC.

Repeatability - All of our work is repeatable, sustainable and scalable, with New Work projects progressing into In Repertoire. This affords us to be able to reuse costume, set and tech.

Digital Work - The largest gains in carbon reduction in wholly digital/hybrid work, come from the complete removal of audiences travelling to a show. By watching from home there is a 99.72% reduction in carbon generated emissions.

Digital Engagement - Upskilling and investing in social media marketing and utilising our digital channels to create more targeted marketing campaigns, reduces printing and therefore reduces our overall environmental footprint. It also saves overhead costs, allowing us to redirect our marketing budget to more optimal campaigns.

Remote Working - Whilst we spend a significant amount of time in physical spaces for projects, where we can, partial remote working still remains a favourable option for us.

For best practice, we follow ITC guidelines on the remuneration of artists and include all holiday pay and expenses as per that guidance which is updated annually.

The outcomes achieved to date have been:

More people are engaged by the arts through access to new cultural experiences.

Increased employment

Direct industry impact through creating toolkits and digital communication

Increase in audiences

More global partnerships

Transforming our work digitally through a pandemic to make the company more sustainable and improve audience growth.

Key messages communicated to a wider audience; connections made with new people.

Re-animation of town centres.

Development of cultural tourism.

Better community cohesion and increased tolerance.

A more positive, harmonious, and imaginative society.

2024/25

Productions/Projects

Belfast Storycafe

The Worst Cafe in the US - New York & Philadelphia

Setting Sailortown - Belfast

Brick Moon - Digital

Granny Jackson Dead - Tour Weston Super Mare/Liverpool/Dundalk/Belfast

Lislagan Fun Palace - CAN Ballymoney

Portrush Fun Palace - Swell Portrush

Operation Spike - Bangor/Newtownards/Portavogie

The Forest Did It First - Garvagh

Coleraine College Project

The House - Estonia/Belfast/CVS

Larnia Christmas Project - Larne

World Office in the World - Belfast

Outreach Projects

Fun Palaces

MEMBERS' REPORT (CONTINUED)(INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)
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Company Mission

- To invest in the development of professional theatre, theatre skills and creative expression through theatrical experiences that surprise, stimulate and entertain.

Company Vision

- Big Telly aims to innovate, involve, inspire, excite, and ignite the imagination through the company's design, delivery, production, touring and training activities.

Big Telly's vision is delivered through the following objectives: -

1. the production and touring of innovative theatre that surprises, stimulates and ignites the imagination throughout NI, RoI, mainland UK and Internationally.
2. the creation of projects with unique strategies of engagement with audiences; with a particular focus on hybrid/digital engagement tools.
3. the development of educational and outreach programmes, open rehearsals and community creativity projects, through workshops, talks and summer schools.
4. the facilitation of the growth of cultural activity throughout NI and to actively seek opportunities to showcase NI work abroad.
5. the delivery of skills enhancement opportunities.
6. maximising the resources available for work through enhancing existing and developing new partnerships.
7. developing the capacity of the company to meet the challenges of a changing environment.

MEMBERS' REPORT (CONTINUED)(INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)
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Structure, governance and management

Big Telly Theatre Company is limited by guarantee and registered with the new Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (NIC102334), governed by a Board of Trustees: Professor Tom Maguire (Chair), Head of Schools of Arts & Humanities at the University of Ulster; Chris Hurd-Wood, retired HR Development Professional; Cara MacMahon, CEO of Voluntary Action North Somerset; Rosana Trainor, Charity Shop Coordinator; Tony Hennessey, Accountant; Ms. Claire Sugden MLA: Alison Grundle Business Improvement Consultant and Eoin O'Connell Principal Data Scientist. Crissy O Donovan is the Company Secretary. The company's board provides relevant expertise in human resources, marketing and PR, finance, contemporary and cultural theatre practice as well as relevant strategic and planning skills.

The company's full-time staff are Company Manager (Crissy O Donovan), Project Manager (Linda McCracken), Finance Manager (Collette Quigley), who together with the Artistic Director (Zoë Seaton) oversee the running of the entire artistic programme. Between them, these company members have over fifty years of experience in managing arts projects.

The company has Ethical Manager Status and is a member of the Independent Theatre Council (ITC) and of Theatre NI. The company operates ITC/UNITE and ITC/Equity minimum rates, terms and conditions for both permanent and contractual staff.

The company has regular staff meetings involving the entire staff team. The core staff report to the Board of Trustees at quarterly meetings. The company regularly reports to ACNI and other funders on its progress through Mid-Year and End of Year Client Reports and quarterly monitoring meetings with our Arts Officer. Professor Tom Maguire (Chair), Head of Schools of Arts & Humanities at the University of Ulster, regularly monitors progress on funding applications and their administration.

The organisation follows the Charity Commission's guidance and sets a target for reserves based on our cash flow requirements and an assessment of the risks facing the organisation. Our aim is to hold reserves at a level which is not excessive but does not put our solvency at risk. The trustees review the number of reserves that are required to ensure that they are adequate to fulfil the charity's continuing obligations on a quarterly basis at their Board meeting.

We hold reserves for the following reasons:

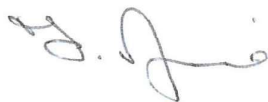
- a. Meet contractual liabilities should the charity have to close including redundancy pay, amounts due to creditors and commitments under leases.
- b. To meet unexpected costs like breakdown of essential office equipment; staff cover in the event of illness, maternity leave, parental leave; and legal costs defending the charity's interest.
- c. To ensure that the charity can continue to provide a stable and quality programme of activity and allowing for financial flexibility to respond to new initiatives and opportunities that may present themselves during the year.
- d. To fund risks that may materialise, resulting in an unexpected increase in expenditure and/or a reduction in income.
- e. To provide working capital when funding is paid in arrears and place the charity in a position where it could apply for funding which can be paid up to 12 months in arrears.

The trustees aim to maintain the charity's reserves at a level which is at least equivalent to two months operational expenditure (circa £20,000) in addition to designating a minimum of £18,991 towards potential redundancy outlay in the event of the company having to cease operations and have done so having regards to its manner of operation of likely funding streams. The reserves that we have set aside provide financial stability and the means for the development of our principal activity. The in kind value we receive each year is approximately £65,000.

On 31 March 2025 the charity held £31,000 as reserves. In the event of reserves dipping below the target the charity will aim to restore the reserves to its minimum level over a four-year period through increased fundraising, increasing earned income and/or reducing expenditure. If reserves exceed the target, then the charity will consider the likely expenditure over the next two years.

The Members' report was approved by the Board of Members.

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025



T Maguire



E O'Connell

Dated: 3 October 2025