

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)

Year ended 31 March 2024

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name Happy Days: EIBF Limited

Charity registration number NIC104807

Company registration number NI613494

Principal office and registered office Office 1
20 Stranmillis Road
Belfast
BT9 5AA

The trustees Mr P Espenhahn (Retired 9 October 2023)
Mr K Gebler
Ms M Heaney
Mr W Morrison
Mr O O'Connor (Retired 1 July 2023)
Mr P Sternberg
Ms O Constant
Ms N McGill
Ms N O'Regan

Independent Examiner Ross Boyd For and on behalf of RBCA Limited
Linenhall Exchange
26 Linenhall Street
Belfast
BT2 8BG

Structure, governance and management

Happy Days : EIBF Limited, which is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee in Northern Ireland on 5 July 2012, registration number NI613494, with the objective of undertaking charitable activities for the benefit of the general public in Fermanagh and arts audiences from across the island of Ireland, Europe and beyond.

In the event of the Company being wound up, members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £10 each.

The first trustees were appointed by the members. Additional and replacement trustees are appointed by a simple majority resolution of the board or members. Trustees do not have a term of office and are not subject to retirement by rotation or re-election.

Objectives and activities

The benefits which flow from our purpose include access to and engagement with world-class arts & cultural provision that otherwise would not exist in the area, to advance the education of the public in the understanding, awareness and value of the work of Nobel Prize winner Samuel Beckett and other relevant writers, the ties between literature and land and showcasing the literary heritage and natural beauty of Fermanagh and the surrounding region generating civic pride. These benefits are evidenced through the delivery of activities, numbers of people engaging, feedback from participants, volunteers, audience members & funders, profile in local, regional and national media and the independent evaluation of the festivals.

In encouraging significant number of people to some very rural and/or environmentally sensitive outdoor venues, there is a risk of unintended low-level environmental damage. However, we promote the 'Leave No Trace' ethos and we can show that this harm is outweighed by the benefits.

The charity's beneficiaries are the general public in Fermanagh and arts audiences from across the island of Ireland, Europe and beyond whilst engaging with the local communities in a number of ways from opportunities to volunteer to participation in events and promoting appreciation of the arts in the area.

Achievements and performance

Our aim is to deliver a world-class arts & cultural festival programme celebrating the life and work of Samuel Beckett and other relevant writers for local, regional and international audiences. Activities are held in the island town of Enniskillen and surrounding areas featuring world-class theatre, music, visual art, comedy and talks with events taking place in a number of unusual venues including uninhabited islands, caves, cliff tops, abandoned buildings, churches and many others.

The events highlight the rich literary traditions locally, promote the area and celebrate the rich literary culture of a rural region which has not traditionally been regarded as a centre for literary heritage and artistic excellence.

Local volunteers engage with local and international artists - using landscape as background in this rural region. Working with schools, the charity provides opportunities to engage with cultural creatives and participate in events - helping embed the area's literary heritage in the community, creating world class events which have received excellent reviews from British, Irish and international media and from participating artists and contributing to wellbeing and education. There is also considerable benefit to the local community.

During this year, the charity worked with the Heritage Lottery to create a sustainable heritage - devising a project to encapsulate the ten years of literary heritage and celebrating the contribution of volunteers, local businesses, schools, and indeed the many civic and community organisations which played such a major role in the Happy Days literary experience. The project looked at how to further innovate literary placemaking with a series of workshops and talks in Fermanagh and engaged with stakeholders in the county on collaborating in a variety of ways.

Financial review

Incoming resources for Happy Days EIBF Limited totalled £72,321 for the year ended 31 March 2024, compared to £81,986 for the year ended 31 March 2023, with outgoing resources of £63,762 (£81,415 in 2023). At 31 March 2024, the company showed a net asset position of £47,302.

Plans for future periods

Building on the festival's literary output and critical success is a key ambition for the trustees with plans in place to ensure wider engagement with both local and international audiences. Using literary heritage as a platform to broaden skillsets in the area, the trustees are working with organisations to deliver an innovative programme in this space. By collaborating with local groups to improve wellbeing, social cohesion, increased participation, accessibility and education, the aim is to develop a sustainable pathway to celebrating literary heritage and the social advantages it brings to an area.

In conjunction with the Heritage Lottery and the Young Foundation, the charity is running an innovative programme to build on skills, knowledge and sense of pride in literary heritage. The aim is also to stimulate and develop an interest in literacy of local pupils and families in the area as well as trying to enhance creativity and development of literature, drama, music and the arts in general in an area where parents and pupils do not have access due to rurality issues. Programmes are in development to build on this and encourage community participation and leadership. The key aims of the programme include building a heritage workforce, developing new and inclusive approaches to literary heritage and developing literary heritage skills across diverse communities especially young people.

Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

The trustees' annual report was approved on 27 December 2024 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

Ms M Heaney
Trustee