

## CRE8 THEATRE LTD

### TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st March 2025

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The trustees of the Society are pleased to present their annual Director's report together with the audited financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31st March 2025 which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with all relevant legislation and with current recommended accounting practice.

#### **Structure, governance and management:**

##### **Board of Trustees:**

Chairperson:	Darren Ferguson
Deputy chair:	Fiona Bell
Treasurer:	Fiona Bell
Secretary:	Simon McClean

**Key management personnel:** Artistic Director: Ms Sarah Lyle

**Independent Examiner:** Aidan Corrigan ACA  
Corrigan CA Limited  
24 Greystone Road  
Antrim  
BT41 2QN

##### **Governing Document:**

Cre8 Theatre Ltd is a limited company governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 18th January 2022. Cre8 Theatre Ltd is a registered charity with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

##### **Appointment of trustees:**

The Chairperson and the Trustees recruit and select new Trustees as required. New Trustees are recruited on the relevance of their professional skills to Cre8 Theatre Ltd's company needs and their potential to be able to make a helpful contribution to the governance of the charity.

As part of the recruitment process, they are made aware of Trustees' legal obligations under charity and company law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the most up to date financial performance of the charity.

##### **Cre8 Theatre Ltd purpose, aims and objectives:**

Cre8 Theatre Ltd is a theatre production company whose mission is to present visually stunning and innovative theatre that enriches, educates and entertains.

Cre8 Theatre Ltd focuses on making work with high production values and is passionate about developing and nurturing its audiences, people and new talent, as well as promoting accessibility for all and working to a model that is sustainable and forward thinking.

The artistic team have a fresh, visionary approach to producing theatre that is inventive, reactionary, exciting and boundary breaking.

**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st March 2025**

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**Cre8 Theatre Ltd aims and objectives are:**

To produce a range of visually stunning, inclusive community focused artistic events.

Examples include:

- digital educational/theme-based school tours
- community puppet shows
- creative workshops
- educational workshops
- pantomimes
- theatrical productions

Cre8 Theatre Ltd aims to develop people's confidence in communication through dance, acting and singing. Cre8 Theatre Ltd also aims to nurture and grow a creative activity focused on integration of the d/Deaf community into the arts sector in Northern Ireland.

**Cre8 Theatre Ltd is committed to promoting:**

- social cohesion
- social inclusion
- equality of opportunity and good community relations through community engagement and critically acclaimed arts practice
- promoting links with marginalised communities to make the Arts sector more accessible to them, with particular focus on the d/Deaf community of NI.

**Creative Achievements and performances:**

Cre8 Theatre Ltd's recent work provides evidence of this:

**March 2024: A Deaf Arts Festival** which showcased a new d/Deaf artist production of 'Fishermans Friend'. An inclusive musical theatre production for both hearing and d/Deaf audiences, where d/Deaf performers and British Sign Language were an integral part of the show. Alongside this theatre production we held a range of shows and events over the weekend, ranging from sign language classes to sign song, to art tours.

**April 2024:** Script writing and song making for Theatre In Your Front Room play.

**May 2024:** Jordanstown School Deaf Arts School Workshops.

**June 2024 - July 2024:** Theatre In Your Front Room 'Corner Shops, Carts and Crochet': Funded by Arts Council Northern Ireland and Mid and East Antrim Borough Council we rehearsed and toured the play around care settings within the borough.

**August 2024:** Cre8 Theatre delivered the Ards and North Down youth arts summer scheme for children aged 6-17 years developing their skills in dance, singing and acting.

**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st March 2025**

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**August - September 2024:** Inspiring Access: Deaf Artists Workshop - Grand Opera House. Cre8 Theatre hosted a Deaf Artist workshop suitable for performers with any level of experience to expand their performance skills.

**September 2024:** BSL Storytime Workshops: Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council and Belfast City Council funded a set of school workshops which focused on developing student understanding of the d/Deaf community and teaching British Sign Language to hearing children across the area. The sessions 'First Steps to Sign Language' were drama-based play sessions raising awareness about culture and workshoping communication methods.

**September 2024:** Sleeping Beauty in Theatre at The Mill and The Courtyard Theatre in October 2024: Sleeping Beauty in Grand Opera House: Funded by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, Belfast City Council, Halifax Foundation and Arts Council of Northern Ireland. Sleeping Beauty featured both d/Deaf and hearing performers and audiences of mostly young people and families. Children in the audience loved getting to try out British Sign Language signs. Children were also encouraged to step onto the stage after the show to meet the actors and look up close at the puppets and scenery used.

**October 2024:** Halloween Theatre in the Park: A superb team of performers created a twisted fairytale walk about performance through the People's Park Pavilion in Ballymena. The event was funded by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and had over 6,000 visitors walk through and interact with the Halloween themed event.

**January - February 2025:** In person, Terrible Tales of Trash Schools Tour funded by Belfast City Council delivered to over 2,700 students in 30 primary schools across Belfast. The show was a theatrical journey through the world of waste. The show brought an exciting and interactive theatre experience to local schools to help young people understand the long-term impact of rubbish on our environment to encourage action to protect the planet. The students met historic characters from the cavemen era to World War II, discussing the challenge waste has faced throughout history.

**March 2025:** Cre8 Theatre ran its third year of the Deaf Arts Festival NI (3), March 2025 where we held a wide range of events: walking tours, comedy improv, coffee mornings, sign classes, sculpting sign classes, a famous comedian and art tours, to sign song and karaoke.

**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st March 2025**

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**Beneficiaries of Cre8 Theatre:**

**1. d/Deaf Community NI:**

Cre8 Theatre Ltd are working on nurturing relationships and building on their work with the d/Deaf community NI, adults, young people and artists. Featuring the people of this community in the programming of year three of the Deafs Arts Festival NI 2025.

Cre8 Theatre Ltd are growing the festival experiences and engagements, such as:

- Connecting with more partners
- Increasing accessibility
- Integrating deaf and hearing communities
- Raising cultural awareness of the d/Deaf community NI
- Curating a unique catalogue of public facing work that engages communities in a sustained programme of outreach, skills training and collaboration

**2. d/Deaf artists:**

We are working hard on ensuring deaf artists are involved in relevant projects from project inception. Incorporating their skills, knowledge and creativity from the seed of the idea, through to project forming and shaping to the end product.

**3. Hearing people and artists:**

We are blending deaf and hearing people and artists together in all of our processes, driving integration in NI forward, against all odds. Invigorating and rewriting the narrative for access and inclusion of the marginalised d/Deaf community and giving time and space for hearing people and artists to learn about deaf culture and have new found knowledge about this community. Including progressing sign language education.

**4. NI Venues:**

We are opening eyes and access in NI, for example we are offering BSL workshops in host festival venue MAC Theatre Belfast. Helping and encouraging the venue to think more about accessibility and its output and day to day product.

**5. Children and Young people:**

We are continuing our work with the children and young people across NI offering summer schemes and holiday workshops in theatre skills.

**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st March 2025**

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**6. Older people:**

We are engaging older people in care home settings in 2025-26 with our project 'Theatre in your front Room' which will see older community participants engage in workshops in puppetry, songwriting, storytelling and music. Their stories being shaped into a touring piece of live theatre performed by professional artists.

**7. Rural living:**

We are and will continue to programme outreach activity that occurs regionally and rurally in Northern Ireland for all ages.

**Public benefit:**

Cre8 Theatre Ltd's aim is to provide accessible professional theatre and arts experiences for all people. Varying project to project especially focussing on children and young people and adults, ethnic minorities, marginalised communities including the d/Deaf community and older people in Northern Ireland. Promoting creativity, making arts accessible and enjoyable for all. The benefit of our work is to provide accessible professional theatre and arts experiences for all families, children and young people ensuring positive impacts on:

- Confidence and self-esteem
- Personal development (including understanding themselves and others better)
- Social development (including potential to challenge cultural prejudices and societal differences)
- Emotional development (including the development of empathy and Emotional IQ)

In addition, the benefits of promoting creativity in the lives of children and young people means that engaging in creative activities can help develop intrinsic human qualities, such as communication, expression, identity, culture and imagination, helping children and young people to shape their individual, community and global identity.

**Plans for future projects:**

In the year of March 2025 to March 2026 Cre8 Theatre Ltd will offer:

**April 2025:** We will work with our partners at Ards and North Down Borough Council, South Eastern Multidisciplinary Trust and Peninsula Healthy Living Partnership, planning the story gathering community workshops for the REAP ACNI 'Theatre in Your Front Room 2' project.

**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st March 2025**

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**May 2025 - June 2025:** We will deliver the 'Theatre in Your Front Room 2' workshops in Ballywater, Kircubbin and Greyabbey.

**August 2025:** We will deliver two workshops for the Grand Opera House at their Grand Family Festival. A Sing Song workshop for deaf and hearing families, with one deaf and one hearing artist and a Puppet Play workshop for 7-10 year olds where we will make puppets and create improvisations and play.

We will write the script, compose the music for, cast and organise the tour for 'Theatre in Your Front Room 2.'

**September 2025:** We will rehearse with 3 actors in 'Theatre in Your Front Room 2 play.'

**October 2025:** We will tour 'Theatre in Your Front Room 2' to 10 venues - community centres, Ards Arts Centre, Portico, nursing homes.

**March 2026:** We will deliver the Deaf Arts Festival NI which will showcase a new d/Deaf artist production. An inclusive theatre production for both hearing and d/Deaf audiences, where d/Deaf performers and British Sign Language will be an integral part of the show. Alongside this theatre production we will hold a range of shows and events over the weekend, ranging from sign language classes to sing song, to arts tours in the MAC Belfast.

**Thank you to our funders:**

Cre8 Theatre Ltd is truly grateful for the financial support it receives from its range of funders. The ongoing funding has enabled Cre8 Theatre Ltd to meet its missions to deliver visually stunning, innovative theatre that enriches, educates and entertains all everyone involved and to continue to ensure that young people and adults across Northern Ireland continue to benefit from our artistic productions and that we could continue to create new innovative projects for the future.

**Funders have included:**

Belfast City Council  
Arts Council NI  
Halifax Foundation NI  
University of Ulster  
Ards and North Down Borough Council

## CRE8 THEATRE LTD

### TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st March 2025

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#### Financial review:

Cre8 Theatre Ltd's total annual income for the year amounted to £82,445 (2024 : £117,642) with total annual expenditure of £85,659 (2024 : £128,316). The total deficit was £3,214 (2024 : deficit £10,674). Unrestricted reserves were £27,490 (2024 : £19,635) and Restricted reserves were £3,227 (2024 : £14,296).

#### Reserves:

The trustees have examined the charity's reserves in light of the main risks to funding the organisation. The trustees continually observe the level of reserves, assessing if reserves are adequate and meet the needs of the charity, as they are aware of the future funding pots and projects the company will be running.

#### Risk management:

The board meets on a quarterly basis where they examine the current strategic risks faced by the Company. Actions are agreed at these meetings to mitigate against these risks.

#### Trustee Approval:

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 9th October 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

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Darren Ferguson

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09-Oct-25