

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 02726275 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1012630

Report of the Trustees and
Unaudited Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025
for
Merlin Theatre Trust Limited

Merlin Theatre Trust Limited

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for the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

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Merlin Theatre Trust Limited

Reference and Administrative Details
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025

TRUSTEES	Ms S Roles Ms E Reynolds Mrs A E Dimery Ms C D Carson Mr S J Goffe
COMPANY SECRETARY	Mrs A E Dimery
REGISTERED OFFICE	Merlin Theatre Trust Limited Bath Road Frome Somerset BA11 2HG
REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER	02726275 (England and Wales)
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER	1012630
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER	Monahans Chartered Accountants Lennox House 3 Pierrepont Street Bath Somerset BA1 1LB

Merlin Theatre Trust Limited

**Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and activities

The object for which the Merlin Theatre Trust was established is to advance education and provide facilities in the interest of social welfare for recreation and leisure time for the inhabitants of Frome and the surrounding neighbourhood.

The purpose and beliefs of the Merlin Theatre Trust

Our purpose is to provide the people of Frome and the surrounding area with excellent, memorable experiences in the performing arts. In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit : running a charity (PB2)'.

We believe that opportunities to enjoy the arts, whether as a member of an audience or as a participant in a production, a workshop or class, can significantly increase the well-being and quality of life of individuals, of communities and of society as a whole.

We believe in collaboration and that - by working with audiences, participants, artists, arts companies and other arts venues, with Frome Community College, other local schools, our local authorities, business community, voluntary groups, media and with our funders and supporters - we will achieve much more than we could without them.

Our aims and objectives

We have four enduring aims:

To be known as an organisation that attracts and supports excellent artists (professional and non-professional) to produce and present their work.

To be talked about as an inclusive organisation that embraces and listens to audiences, participants, learners and volunteers, whatever their background or circumstances.

To provide artists, audiences and participants with excellent, memorable experiences.

To work hand in hand with Frome Community College and other partners to realise the Merlin's potential as a creative, educational and community resource.

Achievements and Performance

We programme an average of 30-35 live events per season working with over 90 volunteers to support the running of the theatre.

Screenings and community productions were the most popular events, Frome Festival was also well attended. We were still able to support small scale professional touring companies and had a full outdoor program in our amphitheatre.

The Christmas show 'Christmas Carol' sold out; this year we were more confident going back to ten shows including a relaxed performance.

Youth theatres continue to go well with maximum attendance. Our summer school production of Legally Blonde sold out and featured over 50 young people including backstage / production crew.

We have had quite a few issues with the building infrastructure. The stage floor is badly damaged due to years of an unknown underground leak. Somerset Council gave us £25k towards a new floor, but the Midsomer Norton Partnership (the Trust who have taken over Frome College and are now our new landlords) are looking into what is causing the leak before we lay a new floor. We have put down a semi-permanent floor for the time being as the damage has affected our programming.

We have completed a lot of fundraising this year and now have some reserves to reinvest in the furniture and backstage areas. This will all take place next year.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial report

The Merlin has seen another significant rise in income over the last year and has continued to attract audiences and increased income. But, as with all similar businesses, there has been a significant increase in costs. Turnover for 24/25 was £270K (an increase of 9.12% from last year) with expenses rising 3.38% to nearly £268K. This small surplus increases reserves, but the theatre will be in a precarious position if costs continue to increase.

The main increase in costs was on salaries alongside other running costs such as insurance. However there was a notable decrease in advertising and marketing expenditure.

Merlin Theatre Trust Limited

**Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Reserves policy and going concern

Reserves are needed to bridge the gap between the spending and receiving of income and to cover unplanned emergency repairs and other expenditure. The trustees consider that the ideal level of reserves as at 31 March 2025 would be £25,000 to £30,000. The current free reserves of £48,464 exceed this level but there are maintenance and capital expenditure requirements in the short to medium-term that will result in the excess reserves being utilised.

The Trust had no negative reserves and the trustees have reviewed the circumstances of the Theatre Trust and consider that adequate resources continue to be available to fund the activities of the Trust and group for the foreseeable future. The trustees are of the view that the Trust is currently a going concern.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

Merlin Theatre Trust Limited is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association; it currently has 53 members. This Trustees report is prepared in accordance with S419(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

Appointment, induction and training of Trustees

Trustees are elected by the Members of the charitable company at the Annual General Meeting - there must be between eight and twelve trustees, who must all be members of the company.

When recruiting new Trustees, the Board considers any specialist skills needed. New Trustees have an orientation meeting with the Chair and are briefed about current plans and recent financial performance. As part of their induction, they meet with key employees and other Trustees.

Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate training events where these will facilitate undertaking their role.

Organisation

The Board of Trustees administers the charity. The Board meets a minimum of five times a year with dates and core agendas planned up to six months in advance. Trustees' working groups consider policies as required.

The Director (Artistic) Claudia Pepler is appointed by the Trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the charity. To facilitate effective operations, the Director (Artistic), within terms of delegation approved by the Trustees, has authority for overall management of staff and the business, artistic programming, drafting of key documents, reporting to public Funders and financial and business planning matters. Business is planned and managed through a Development Programme.

The trustees have examined the major strategic, business and operational risks that the charity faces. The trustees are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate these risks.

This is demonstrated in the following way:-

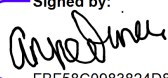
Finance papers and figures are presented in advance of Board meetings and financial reporting is included on the agenda. These papers are also circulated to our Funders including Frome Town Council.

Our Volunteers

Thanks and gratitude are extended to all members of staff and the volunteers who help in the smooth running of the Merlin and in particular the stewards who staff the bar, coffee area and shop, plus of course stewarding for shows, Box office and Front of House. Many of the staff and volunteers are busy 'behind the scenes' and so their work can go un-noticed. It is largely due to their work however that the Merlin is such a successful theatre. It is estimated that the volunteer hours are worth more than £15,000 in in-kind support to the theatre.

19/12/2025

Approved by order of the board of trustees on and signed on its behalf by:

Signed by: 
.....FBF58C0983824D8.....
Mrs A E Dimery - Trustee

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
Merlin Theatre Trust Limited**

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Merlin Theatre Trust Limited ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since your charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a listed body. I can confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by Section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of Section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)).

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 by:

Mark Powell

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Mark Powell CA

Monahans
Chartered Accountants
Lennox House
3 Pierrepont Street
Bath
Somerset
BA1 1LB

19/12/2025

Date:

Merlin Theatre Trust Limited**Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies		6,815	-	6,815	9,707
Charitable activities					
Box office takings					
Youth Groups		146,740	-	146,740	144,427
Overheads recovered and sundry income		14,413	-	14,413	9,814
Hirings		9,040	-	9,040	7,871
Live Streaming		10,732	-	10,732	7,081
Microphones		32,165	-	32,165	27,209
		3,000	-	3,000	-
Other trading activities	2	47,076	-	47,076	41,272
Investment income	3	70	-	70	92
Total		<u>270,051</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>270,051</u>	<u>247,473</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds		25,904	-	25,904	18,828
Charitable activities					
Cost of productions		236,195	5,413	241,608	242,342
Total		<u>262,099</u>	<u>5,413</u>	<u>267,512</u>	<u>261,170</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		7,952	(5,413)	2,539	(13,697)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		55,951	25,788	81,739	95,829
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>63,903</u></u>	<u><u>20,375</u></u>	<u><u>84,278</u></u>	<u><u>82,132</u></u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

Merlin Theatre Trust Limited

Balance Sheet
31 March 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	8	15,439	20,375	35,814	44,944
CURRENT ASSETS					
Stocks	9	2,697	-	2,697	2,697
Debtors	10	6,882	-	6,882	2,731
Cash at bank and in hand		74,095	-	74,095	60,148
		<u>83,674</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>83,674</u>	<u>65,576</u>
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	11	(35,210)	-	(35,210)	(28,388)
		<u>48,464</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>48,464</u>	<u>37,188</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS					
		<u>48,464</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>48,464</u>	<u>37,188</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES					
		<u>63,903</u>	<u>20,375</u>	<u>84,278</u>	<u>82,132</u>
NET ASSETS					
		<u>63,903</u>	<u>20,375</u>	<u>84,278</u>	<u>82,132</u>
FUNDS					
	12			63,903	56,344
Unrestricted funds				20,375	25,788
Restricted funds				<u>84,278</u>	<u>82,132</u>
TOTAL FUNDS					
				<u>84,278</u>	<u>82,132</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2025.

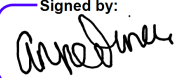
The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- (a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 19/12/2025 and were signed on its behalf by:

Signed by: 
 FBF58C0983824D8.....
 Mrs A E Dimery - Trustee

Merlin Theatre Trust Limited**Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025****1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES****Basis of preparing the financial statements**

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) '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 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £250 or more are capitalised at cost

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost of an asset, less its estimated residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Theatre refurbishment - 5% straight line
Office equipment - 20% or 25% straight line
Theatre equipment - 10% or 20% straight line

Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value, after making due allowance for obsolete and slow moving items.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Funds held by the charity are either:

- Unrestricted general funds - these can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.
- Restricted funds - these can only be used for particular restricted purposes.

Pension costs

The theatre makes employers contributions to defined contribution scheme for its employees. These costs are included in the Financial Statements on an accruals basis.

Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis which the trustees consider to be appropriate due to the free reserves and small surplus in the year.

Consequently, the trustees are confident that the company will have sufficient funds to continue to meet its liabilities as they fall due for at least 12 months from the date of approval of the financial statements and therefore have prepared the financial statements on a going concern basis.

Merlin Theatre Trust Limited**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025****2. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES**

	2025	2024
	£	£
Bar & Catering income	<u>47,076</u>	<u>41,272</u>

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2025	2024
	£	£
Deposit account interest	<u>70</u>	<u>92</u>

4. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2025	2024
	£	£
Independent examination fee	1,950	1,820
Depreciation - owned assets	<u>9,130</u>	<u>9,940</u>

5. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2025 nor for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 March 2025 nor for the year ended 31 March 2024.

6. STAFF COSTS

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2025	2024
Admin Staff	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

7. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies	9,707	-	9,707
Charitable activities			
Box office takings			
Youth Groups	144,427	-	144,427
Overheads recovered and sundry income	9,814	-	9,814
Hirings	7,871	-	7,871
Live Streaming	7,081	-	7,081
	27,209	-	27,209
Other trading activities	41,272	-	41,272
Investment income	92	-	92

Merlin Theatre Trust Limited

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

7. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - continued

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Total	247,473	-	247,473
EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds	18,828	-	18,828
Charitable activities			
Cost of productions	236,928	5,414	242,342
Total	255,756	5,414	261,170
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	(8,283)	(5,414)	(13,697)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	64,627	31,202	95,829
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>56,344</u>	<u>25,788</u>	<u>82,132</u>

8. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Improvements to property £	Theatre Equipment £	Office Equipment £	Totals £
COST				
At 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025	77,107	101,981	5,997	185,085
DEPRECIATION				
At 1 April 2024	55,549	78,595	5,997	140,141
Charge for year	1,797	7,333	-	9,130
At 31 March 2025	57,346	85,928	5,997	149,271
NET BOOK VALUE				
At 31 March 2025	19,761	16,053	-	35,814
At 31 March 2024	21,558	23,386	-	44,944

9. STOCKS

	2025 £	2024 £
Stocks	2,697	2,697

Merlin Theatre Trust Limited

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025**

10. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR		2025	2024
		£	£
Trade debtors		1,449	576
VAT		5,433	2,155
		<u>6,882</u>	<u>2,731</u>
11. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR		2025	2024
		£	£
Trade creditors		4,377	10,137
Social security and other taxes		1,078	2,533
Other creditors		732	1,543
Accruals and deferred income		29,023	14,175
		<u>35,210</u>	<u>28,388</u>
12. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS			
		Net	
	At 1.4.24	movement	At
	£	in funds	31.3.25
		£	£
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	55,951	7,952	63,903
Restricted funds			
Arts Council England, South West	24,388	(4,713)	19,675
Theatre Royal Bath	1,400	(700)	700
	<u>25,788</u>	<u>(5,413)</u>	<u>20,375</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>81,739</u>	<u>2,539</u>	<u>84,278</u>

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming	Resources	Movement
	resources	expended	in funds
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	270,051	(262,099)	7,952
Restricted funds			
Arts Council England, South West	-	(4,713)	(4,713)
Theatre Royal Bath	-	(700)	(700)
	<u>-</u>	<u>(5,413)</u>	<u>(5,413)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>270,051</u>	<u>(267,512)</u>	<u>2,539</u>

Merlin Theatre Trust Limited**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 March 2025****12. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued****Comparatives for movement in funds**

	At 1.4.23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.24 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	64,627	(8,283)	56,344
Restricted funds			
Arts Council England, South West	29,102	(4,714)	24,388
Theatre Royal Bath	2,100	(700)	1,400
	<u>31,202</u>	<u>(5,414)</u>	<u>25,788</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>95,829</u>	<u>(13,697)</u>	<u>82,132</u>

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	247,473	(255,756)	(8,283)
Restricted funds			
Arts Council England, South West	-	(4,714)	(4,714)
Theatre Royal Bath	-	(700)	(700)
	<u>-</u>	<u>(5,414)</u>	<u>(5,414)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>247,473</u>	<u>(261,170)</u>	<u>(13,697)</u>

Arts Council - Bridging Bid Funding, Education & Other Projects, Arts Council Programme Development, G4A Business Development and Frome Community Trust Funds represent funding received by the charity to undertake specific projects or fund certain costs.

The Theatre Royal Bath grant was given to the Charity to fund the purchase of lighting and sound equipment to replace old items with modern equivalents.

13. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2025.